

[THE]
**PRESENT STATE
OF
DENMARK,**

**IN RELATION TO
Its GOVERNMENT and LAWS,
Its TRADE and MANUFACTURES,
Its REVENUES and FORCES,
Compiled from the Public Archives, and
other authentic Materials.**

**BEING
An exact DESCRIPTION of that Kingdom,
as it now exists.**

**A N D
Different from any ACCOUNT hitherto published
in the English Language.**

**In a Series of LETTERS,
Mostly written by Monsieur ROGER.**

L O N D O N :

**Printed for THO. OSBORNE, in Gray's-Inn,
Holborne. MDCCCLXII.**

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE editor being distant from London when the first part of the following work was printed, the sheets were corrected by another person, who has deviated in a few instances from the method of spelling which now is most in use; and tho to preserve uniformity in the book, the same orthography has been continued throughout, The editor considers himself obliged to acquaint the public in this manner, how it was first introduced.



TO THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl of BOTHMER,

Lord of the Bed-Chamber to the

KING OF DENMARK,



AND

Danish MAJESTY'S Envoy Extraordinary

TO THE

BRITISH COURT.

A 2

My

My LORD,

YOUR residence in this country has made you well acquainted with the nature of its constitution. You have found that all ranks of men contribute in some degree towards influencing the measures of the government; that the slightest causes produce sometimes disunion between Great-Britain and any foreign state, towards which the breasts of the people are possessed with hatred or disesteem; that an alliance, on the other hand, proves much closer, and the friendship becomes more lasting, as the conformity happens to be greater in the religion, manners, and government of both nations.

Where the public opinion is of such importance, care should be taken that no unjust ideas concerning neighbouring states universally prevail. Endeavours

deavours should, at least, be made, that our general prepossessions may coincide with our political interests.

Such is the case in many instances. But if we are strangely prejudiced against a nation, from whose ancestors a considerable number of the inhabitants of this island are descended; the produce of whose country has been hitherto necessary to our navigation; whose general traffic no way interferes with that of Great-Britain; whose opinions in religion may in the most material parts be considered as our own; many of whose laws are remarkably conformable to ours; whose government is milder than that of several republican states; whose princes possess not greater, and exercise much less, authority, than most other sovereigns in Europe; deserves it not public attention to enquire the cause from whence such a prejudice proceeds?

This effect will be found to have arisen from what is the common cause of error, a mistake in forms and in words. It will be also found that a zealous friend to the british commonweal availed himself of this general prepossession, at a time when liberty was not fully as yet established in England, nor the revolution which brought it about as yet sufficiently reconciled to every mind; and in order to render odious to the people every example of unrestrained authority, he published a partial and mistaken *account of Denmark*, as it was supposed to have been in the year sixteen hundred and ninety-two.

At present that no such motives, no fear for liberty can exist in Britain; and that, on the other hand, the danish government is grown much milder, and more uniform than when
lord

lord Molesworth wrote ; as well from the upright intentions and excellent administration of a GOOD KING, as from its being more remote from a period of a vicious and tyrannical aristocracy ; every reason unites to applaud the attempt of rooting out such unnatural and pernicious prejudices, by laying before the public eye an impartial and authentic STATE OF DENMARK as it now exists.

As the publication of the following letters in the english language must greatly contribute to this effect, I have embraced this opportunity of doing a real service to my country. And as the attainment of so desirable an end must also in its consequences redound to the advantage of your fellow-subjects, I am proud of the permission of inscribing this performance to your excellency, whose love for the union and happiness of the

two nations is equal to the perfect
esteem You have so justly acquired
from both.

I am, my Lord, with sentiments
of the highest consideration and re-
spect,

Your excellency's most obedient

and most humble servant,

The EDITOR;

10 JY 63

PRE-

P R E F A C E.

A BOOK written concerning a monarchic state by a Republican of Geneva, will probably excite the curiosity of others, as it has done mine. Monsieur Roger, author of the following fifteen letters, was a man of an independent fortune, bred in the principles of liberty, and born in the freest commonwealth we know. He had travelled through most parts of Europe. His rank, abilities, and knowledge procured him the acquaintance, and afterwards the esteem of the most eminent persons every where he went. The same favourable reception was not denied to him in Denmark. A full opportunity was allowed him of becoming acquainted with every circumstance relative to that king-

kingdom. Interested views could be by no means his inducement to publish a description of what he had seen. He was possessed of no employment, he was promised no reward. He could not be biassed, in favour at least of the danish state, by prejudice, flattery, or fear. As a sensible and curious traveller he follows the general method of writing observations on what he saw. How these remarks were collected first together, and on what occasion communicated to the public eye, let us learn from his own words.

“ Many were the motives which
 “ concurred towards undertaking
 “ the following performance. As
 “ soon as I made some progress in
 “ the knowledge of the government
 “ of Denmark, its mildness and regularity became the subject of my
 “ surprize and admiration. Most
 “ foreigners consider it as a *despotic*
 “ state.

" state. And that expression con-
 " veys an odious meaning, very lit-
 " tle applicable to the moderation
 " and justice of the danish monar-
 " chy. To be more favourably con-
 " sidered, it only wanted to be bet-
 " ter known. No truer ideas can
 " be formed of a state than those
 " which are taken from the laws and
 " forms of administration. These I
 " have studied with attention. My
 " guides were the most learned and
 " most celebrated among the Danes.
 " I can with pleasure boast of the
 " names of the attorney-general
 " STAMPE, of LOWSEN, counsellor
 " of the auditor-general of the ma-
 " rine, KOFORD-ANCKER, all three
 " counsellors of state, and all three
 " my friends and my instructors.
 " Their complaisance towards me
 " equalled their profound knowlege
 " of the subject. And on this head,
 " as the assistance they afforded me
 " was

“ was the surest, so the information I received was the most satisfactory.

“ Besides this love of truth, and
 “ this desire of doing justice to the
 “ government of Denmark, I had
 “ views of a more private and partial nature. Curious men of different nations, with whom I hold
 “ a constant correspondence, were
 “ desirous of being acquainted with
 “ a kingdom and a king which attract at present the general attention and applause of Europe. It
 “ was impossible to satisfy separately
 “ every friend on the several questions
 “ that were made me. There was no
 “ description of Denmark to which I
 “ could refer. Those which have been
 “ attempted are in many places false,
 “ and in most, imperfect. Written,
 “ beside, a considerable time ago,
 “ they bear but little relation to the
 “ pre-

“ present state of a country which
 “ has made so many gradual ad-
 “ vances towards improvement. It
 “ was therefore necessary to commu-
 “ nicate to my correspondents what
 “ I saw myself; and the publication
 “ of the several letters, which were
 “ originally addressed to particular
 “ persons, became the only means of
 “ contenting the curiosity of all.

“ I even thought I was doing
 “ some service to humanity, since it
 “ must be by perfecting the grand
 “ art of governing mankind, that any
 “ hope may be conceived of encrea-
 “ sing general happiness. No better
 “ method can be found of discover-
 “ ing the best possible laws, than
 “ that of comparing together the va-
 “ rious constitutions of various go-
 “ vernments. Thus it is that Mon-
 “ tesquieu is become the legislator of
 “ nations. By collecting observations
 “ on

“ on their manners, customs, regu-
 “ lations, he has raised an admirable
 “ structure equally belonging to e-
 “ very people. And if such a man
 “ can be supposed to have suecessors,
 “ it will redound to my satisfaction
 “ that I have prepared some useful
 “ materials for their design.

“ Many things may be omitted in
 “ this performance which the most
 “ inquisitive among foreigners would
 “ desire to learn; much less is it pre-
 “ tended to contain every thing a
 “ Dane should know about his own
 “ country; but none of the essential
 “ parts of the picture here intended
 “ are left out. And the scrupulous
 “ exactness which has conducted my
 “ enquiry, merits some indulgence
 “ for any other defect.

“ I have written with candor what
 “ I had endeavoured to examine with
 “ impar-

" impartiality. The great aim of
 " every author should undoubtedly
 " be that of instructing his fellow-
 " creatures. No care should be
 " wanting in him to render himself
 " capable of so important an employ-
 " ment. He ought particularly to di-
 " vest himself of every prejudice. He
 " should never employ his pen with
 " a view to sooth by flattery, or
 " torment by satyr.

" Notwithstanding these precau-
 " tions which I have taken, error
 " may still have found its way to the
 " following letters. And therefore
 " the best effect I wish from this
 " attempt of mine, is this ; that it
 " may enduce some abler man to
 " undertake a more complete per-
 " formance on the same subject.

" In the mean time, I shall esteem
 " my labor well employed, and my
 " en-

“endeavours fully answered, if what
 “is now offered to the perusal of
 “the public, can furnish new mo-
 “tives to every reader for loving his
 “country and its laws; and if it
 “can make sovereigns and subjects
 “still more conscious that a wise,
 “beneficent, and peaceable monarch
 “is one of the most precious gifts
 “that heaven bestows on any earthly
 “state.”

A sixteenth letter by the Editor is
 added in this collection to those of
 monsieur Roger. It contains some
 interesting particulars and an account
 of new improvements which would
 have been communicated to the pub-
 lic in a much fuller and more sa-
 tisfactory manner, had monsieur Ro-
 ger lived to finish his design.

10 JY 63

LETTERS

CONCERNING

DENMARK.

LETTER the First.

*To monsieur Beaumont counsellor at law
in the Republic of Geneva.*

SIR,

IT is doing great injustice to the constitution of this country to say it is despotic. The monarch possesses, indeed, the sole authority ; but his administration is one of the most moderate and regular in the world. Its mildness is not only owing to the personal virtues of the king, but is the

B

natural

natural effect of the constitution. As you seem, sir, desirous to become acquainted with a country which excites at present the general curiosity of Europe, tho' situated at one of its extremities; it is proper I should begin by giving you a just and adequate idea of the nature of its government.

If by despotism is understood unlimited monarchy, the constitution of Denmark is certainly despotic. But this idea alone is not what affrights your free, republican soul; the terror arises from the opinion we conceive of the several circumstances which are supposed to attend it. And these additional ideas which take their source in the abuse that eastern princes make of their unbounded authority, must indeed be revolting to every mind where education has not stifled the sentiments of nature.

Those barbarous powers, accustomed to look upon their will as the only mea-

measure of right and wrong, confirmed in this monstrous opinion by the vile flattery of a people of slaves, and supported in their pretensions by the extravagance of blind fanaticism, regulate their authority on principles the most injurious to human nature. From thence, these arbitrary decisions so often contradictory to each other; these momentary orders instead of established laws; this total suppression of every rule, of every form, and of every council; from thence, in a word, a government whose acts are so many fits of tumultuous and unbridled passion. Such is the sad origin of those accessory ideas which we imperceptibly join to the word Despotism, even when we mean only to express an unlimited monarchy, as if absolute authority were necessarily tyrannical. Mankind is generally more affected by words than things. To avoid therefore every ambiguity, let us be guided in our enquiry, by Montesquieu, the

immortal author of the *spirit of laws*; and let us apply the word despotism to those monstrous governments alone which are entirely supported by *fear*. In fact, how extremely do they differ from a well-regulated monarchy, tho ever so absolute! and how unjust would it be to confound them, either as a politician who describes, or as a minister who governs!

These distinctions once laid down, I shall find it easy to convince you, that the constitution of these realms bears every characteristic of a true monarchy. The power of the prince is indeed without controul, but was there ever a more just one? His title is the most authentic, and most lawful: nothing less than the consent of all orders of people in the kingdom, given, first, by their representatives in the assembly of the states in the year one thousand six hundred and sixty, and afterwards confirmed by themselves. The kingdom, whose very capital

capital had been attacked, was scarce escaped from the greatest dangers; and the nation convinced by experience, that a confined authority is sometimes insufficient to defend the state, offended besides at the insulting superiority which the nobility affected, comes at once to a resolution, in order to remedy those evils which it suffered, to repose its whole authority in the hands of its sovereign. This resignation of its power is made in the most solemn manner, and after mature deliberation. You see, sir, how lawful the authority is of such kings. Here you find no princes who subdue by open arms, or who ruin by stealth and by secret practices, the liberty of their subjects; here existed no series of usurpations which, strengthening each other by degrees, bring on slavery at last; it is a power justly acquired, as pure in its source, as it has been since, and still remains to be, in its effects.

Of all the forms of government the best without doubt is that of an absolute monarchy, when in the hands of a wise and instructed prince: there is none where secrecy is so sure, activity so great, the motions so uniform, or the sinews so powerful. In this constitution the sovereign is an acting principle, whose life is communicated to every part of the state, and whose warmth passes with rapidity from the center to the extremities. His mind grasping the various springs of government, animates and directs them all to the same object; and thus maintains that balance and harmony in which consist the health and vigor of the political body*.

It

* "Absolute monarchies seem most form'd for sudden and vigorous efforts of power, either in attacking, or in defending; whilst in free constitutions, the forms of government must be necessarily more complicated and slow; so that in these, the

It is very true that monarchy would not be productive of all these happy effects, if the sovereigns themselves were not wise enough to regulate the exercise of their own authority: and this is the respect in which despotism so very widely differs, and is distinguishable from monarchy. The despot is guided by no other rule than the caprice which reigns in the moment he determines: the monarch makes his intentions known by well-considered and permanent laws. The despot confines himself to no forms: the monarch observes those which he has instituted for the proper management of affairs, and against any surprise of party or artifice. In a despotic state, every man is equal, because all are equally slaves: a mo-

the same secrecy cannot be always kept, nor the same dispatch always made, nor the same steadiness of measures always pursued."

Lord Bolingbroke's dissertation upon parties.

narchic government admits those intermediate powers, which at the same time give strength and stability to the throne, and are the check and moderators of supreme authority. The despot is at once judge, party, and prosecutor; and thus unites qualities which are contradictory and incompatible: the monarch makes no difficulty of submitting his cause, and pleading against the meanest of his subjects, before his own tribunals. The despot, centring every thing in himself, looks upon his territories as a private property, which he can dispose of at will: a monarch regards his empire as a society, whose happiness he is bound to promote.

These are, I think, the principal lines which mark the boundaries between monarchy and despotism; and these marks you may easily distinguish in the government of Denmark. It is founded on a system of laws that regulates

lates the administration of justice in civil and in criminal affairs, the equity and mildness of which I will leave you to be judge, when I shall describe them to you fully; but give me leave to anticipate the account by this one observation: that, not in the freest states are trials for crimes settled on a more advantageous footing for the liberty of the subject: no extraordinary commissions are appointed to judge particular persons; all causes are carried before the courts to whose jurisdiction the parties belong. No man who is accused can be debarred, after the first examination, from employing every means which may contribute to his defence; the advice of lawyers may be taken, who are even allowed to plead for the prisoner, if he is not contented with the council the magistrates name for him. The sentences pronounced upon the guilty are never executed with precipitation. There is a right of appealing from one tribunal to another, when the

the life or honor of a subject is concerned; and causes of this nature are examined and brought before three different courts, before they are put in execution. That dangerous and delusive method of putting criminals to the torture is entirely exploded, except in matters of high-treason, or when the prisoner is already condemned to death; and even in these cases there must be an express order from the king, which he grants so very seldom, that for twenty-five years past, scarce two instances can be found of persons put to the rack. You will be surprised, I dare say, to find this monarchy surpass in mildness some republican states; and you are too well persuaded of what importance personal security is to civil society, not to acknowledge the great value of these institutions.

Though the nobility has lost many of the privileges it arrogated before the revolution of one thousand six hundred and sixty, those it yet enjoys are

are fully sufficient to deem it among the intermediate powers which are essential to monarchy. You will, I doubt not, be of this opinion, when I inform you of the several prerogatives it possesses to this day.

It is a gross mistake to imagin that the revolution of one thousand six hundred and sixty, destroyed the liberty of a kingdom which had hitherto been free. Liberty, properly speaking, was known only to the nobility; the clergy and commons were of no sort of consequence in the assembly of the states. The nobles alone possessed the privilege of levying taxes, and the first use they made of it, was to exempt themselves from all. Hence you may conclude, that the revolution which deprived the nobility of such odious exemptions, in fact did nothing more than change the principles of a vicious aristocracy into those of a well-regulated monarchy; and establish, in opposition

position to the growing influence of the nobility, a power the stronger and more necessary, as the civil and political oppression in which they had held the commons was but little distant from total, abject slavery.

Could I enter at present into a detail of the administration of affairs, you should soon see how they all pass thro regular channels, whence they never deviate. Every branch of the sovereign authority is entrusted to different departments, and each affair is several times examined with attention, before it comes to the king. This guards him against every opportunity of surprise, and makes him better acquainted with the real state of things.

I shall conclude with this remark, that paternal power, such as it was exercised in the first ages of the world, is a pretty just emblem of this government. I do not speak of the present
moment

moment alone, in which the throne is filled by a prince who places his grandeur in making his people happy: but I say such is the constitution of the state. The Danes are naturally inclined to look upon their king as the father of his subjects: a custom even prevails among them constantly to give him that name; and if you read the history of this country, you will be obliged to confess, that the extension of power has never induced the possessors of it to an abuse of their authority: reigning with justice and mildness, they render their sway so amiable, that not one drop of blood has been ever spilled in order to confirm or support it.

I am, SIR,

Your humble Servant.

LET-

LETTER the Second.

To the same.

I SHALL now acquit myself, Sir, of the promise which I made some time ago of explaining to you the form of this government. I shall take the authority in its source, and follow it thro the different channels by which it is distributed in a regular and gradual progression.

The king unites in his own person every right of sovereignty, but he does not exercise them all himself. The juridical power is entrusted as far as relates to the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, to a supreme court which is held at Copenhagen. The german provinces belonging to his danish majesty have also their tribunal, which, for the royal part of the dutchy of Holstein, resides

resides at Gluckstadt; for the dutchy of Sleswig at the city of Sleswig; and for the counties of Oldenbourg and Delmenhorst, at Oldenbourg. I design to fill up a future letter with every thing that concerns the administration of justice. For the present I confine myself to some of the chief prerogatives of sovereignty, and to the manner according to which they are exercised.

The king determines in his council the general interests of his dominions. In this assembly bills are proposed, discussed, and finally receive the royal assent. Here his majesty approves or rejects every enterprise or alteration of moment. In this council he grants privileges to particular persons, and explains the true sense and spirit of the several laws that are enacted, how far they were meant to extend, and within what limits they are to be restrained. It is here, in a word, that the king declares his intentions with regard to the
most

most important affairs of the kingdom.

This method of treating all considerable matters in the king's council, contributes to render the administration regular, uniform and constant. By this means the monarch avoids the dangers of precipitation or surprise. And yet this is not the only measure which is taken to secure against error or deceit: all affairs which are to be decided in council, are brought before the danish and german chanceries, who begin by sending the different memorials and demands to those whose interest or employment it is to examine or oppose them.

In each of these departments, a committee, upon the report of one of its members, considers the titles and the reasons that are alleged on both sides, and the result determines their opinion. This judgment which is founded on
the

the extracts of all the papers relative to the affair, is registered in the rolls as a testimony of the integrity of the reporter, and as a record of the motives which determined the resolution.

If the question in debate has any connexion with the general order of the kingdom, the attorney-general, who has a seat in the danish chancery, must be consulted, and give in his opinion in writing. In each of the chanceries there is a secretary of state who presides at the committee. The other members are, partly, men well versed in matters of the law, and partly young persons of quality who attend, in order to acquire a knowledge of those affairs with which they are afterwards to be entrusted. This is the first channel through which every thing passes before it is presented to the sovereign. It is here that all pro-

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posals

posals undergo first examination, and are prepared for the council of ministers of state assembled, after whose determination, they are laid before his majesty. This is sufficient, one should imagine, to throw on every subject of discussion all the light which it is susceptible of receiving; but the greater the authority of these kings, the more precautions they appear to have used in order to prevent surprise or abuse of power: not contented with having established this series of different examinations, they intended also that the several councils should serve as checks upon the conduct of each other. When an affair has the least connexion with any other council beside the one to which it naturally belongs, this other council must also be advised with; and the king's pleasure is so positive in this respect, that even when a department has already come to a resolution, the board which should have been

been consulted, and happened to be neglected, has still a right to present remonstrances, and may expect redress. This remark I cannot too much insist upon, because nothing is more directly opposite, than this custom, to the nature of despotism, where the authority of the prince passes entire and uncontrouled into the hands of those who are employed in the exercise of it.

You may perceive, Sir, by what little I have already observed, that things are not carried on here by starts; but that their march is regular, and the discussion deliberate, before a decision is made. The states the most exposed to the abuses of absolute power are those, in which the prince determines matters himself, upon informations which are always insufficient when taken by him alone, and almost always arbitrary when he is not surrounded by people obliged

by their employments to remind him constantly of the laws of the land. The sovereign of Denmark avoids these dangers by the wise rules which he has laid down for the exercise of his own authority. It would be very difficult that an affair so strictly examined should not acquire the most perfect maturity before it arrives at the monarch's hand; and it would be very extraordinary that it could be misrepresented by interest, or disguised by partiality, in the midst of so many eyes which are opened to detect the fraud.

I have already mentioned something with regard to the offices of chancery. To these recourse is had upon all occasions where the royal authority must immediately intervene, such as the explication of the law, dispensations, privileges, the general administration of the kingdom, the disputes that arise between different

rent bodies immediately dependant on his majesty, complaints against his officers or the magistrates of towns, and in general, all those matters which do not belong to the ordinary courts of justice; before whom, I am assured it is observed as an inviolable rule, to bring all causes that fall naturally under their jurisdiction. I might enter into a detail which would convince you of the advantages, that a monarchy possesses in the dispatching of affairs, and how often a sovereign's decisive power is useful in the explication and application of laws, whose expressions cannot be otherwise than general. But my intentions are not to become the encomiast of royalty. I only mean to rectify the false ideas that were conceived of a government very commonly, but very improperly, looked upon as despotic.

I shall now give you some account of the other departments which

are established in this kingdom. The revenue, war, marine, and the council of commerce and general economy are the four principal ones. The office of lord high treasurer at present held in commission, is exercised by a board of three lord deputies and of several assistants who make reports. The department of war, and that of the marine, have each a council, where all matters relative thereto are discussed, in order afterwards to be presented to the king by the proper secretary of state. In the council of commerce and general economy are examined all projects or proposals tending to the increase of trade, to multiply manufactures, to the extension of navigation, and the perfection of agriculture. Before this board are heard all those who have any new establishment, or any improvement to propose; and by this channel they receive the assistance and encouragement

ment which the king is always ready to grant when their schemes are approved.

Thus far I have given you a general idea of this government. Tho' the sketch I have drawn be rough and incomplete, yet will it be sufficient to shew that this kingdom has its constant forms and constitutions, the essential attributes of every monarchy. I shall conclude this letter with a few remarks concerning the administration of the provinces. They are governed by lieutenants who are charged with the maintainance of the laws, the execution of the orders of the sovereign, the inspection over the king's domains, and the special protection of the peasants; but these lieutenants are so tied down by the laws of the country, that they can do nothing without them or against them. They have no jurisdiction over any of the king's subjects, except in affairs rela-

tive to marriage. In all other matters they can only perform the office of mediators; and this function, exercised by those who represent the sovereign, and in itself so well adapted to the spirit of moderation, which is the soul of this monarchy, must certainly diminish the number of law suits very considerably. These lieutenants are never invested with any extraordinary authority which might give room for arbitrary decisions. There is always access to the throne, and to the superior tribunals of justice, for any complaint of grievances brought against them; and this renders the government of the provinces as moderate and as mild as that of the capital.

I am, &c.

L E T-

-am who has in his power of life
 -they can only perform the office
 -**L E T T E R** **R**athe **T**hird
 -the report on which holds
 -the law *To the same*

THE resemblance which I men-
 tioned to you, Sir, that I found
 between monarchic authority, such
 as it is exercised in Denmark, and
 paternal power, struck me first, on
 reading the laws by which this coun-
 try is governed. I perceived in the
 whole extent of the legislature, that
 equity, that moderation, that regard
 for the little ones, those (I may al-
 most say) domestic attentions, for
 every subject, which should charac-
 terise the administration of a wise fa-
 ther of a family. And indeed every
 motive concurs to recall these princi-
 ples to the minds of all monarchs
 who are happy enough to understand
 their true interest. The constitution

of this state particularly requires such a spirit. The more absolute is authority, the more it should be exercised with mildness and moderation; and a wise prince will never forget that the measures he takes to prevent oppression, are so many means by which he secures the prosperity of his dominions. This protection which a good king owes to every individual in his dominions, is one of the duties which the sovereigns of Denmark have had most at heart to perform, and is one of the motives which must render their government ever precious to their subjects. And indeed when I considered the spirit of this monarchy, and that I wanted to account for this attachment of the Danes towards those who rule over them, I thought I could not assign a more powerful cause. If my conjecture be founded, can there be a more solid support of monarchic authority, or a more

more amiable tie between the prince and people?

These reflexions I thought necessary as an introduction to the danish jurisprudence. They are the more properly placed here, as it should seem that it is in consequence of this spirit which I observed to you, that the king chuses to be considered as present at the administration of justice in the supreme court of his dominions. Recalling to our minds those times in which kings less overwhelmed by business looked upon it as one of their principal functions to render justice to their subjects, he has ordered that his throne fixed up in the sovereign tribunal, should continually remind the judges of him whose place they hold, and of the duties which that honor imposes upon them. To him the lawyers address themselves when pleading,

and

and the judges in pronouncing their opinions. Every year he assists at the solemn opening of this tribunal, and as often as he thinks it necessary, he gives them new instructions with regard to the performance of their duty. Thus you see, Sir, that he is at the same time the source of all jurisdiction, and the soul of justice. But tho' contented with being supreme chief, he commits the exercise to an established tribunal, in affairs that concern only the fortune of his subjects, he is still more attentive to the preservation of their life and honor, and reserves to himself the approving or mitigating every sentence which tends to take away the one, or stain the other. Nor can any such be put into execution without a warrant signed by his hand. They who are acquainted with this country, know that crimes must be of a very heavy nature to raise the arm of a prince

a prince who is always disposed to spare the blood of his people.

The attention of the laws for preventing the injustice of officers entrusted with the power of the foreign, is another proof of his paternal care. His subjects are authorised, and, I may almost say, invited to prosecute people in office or employment for injuries committed by them, and to bring their complaints immediately to the foot of the throne, or before the ordinary tribunals. And what I think important to observe, being a thing entirely peculiar to this country, is, that when there is an appeal from one court to another, the inferior judge is always summoned to defend the sentence which he has pronounced; and tho he is not obliged to appear, yet the superior court has thus an opportunity, and is immediately authorised

to

to reprimand him every time he fails in the performance of his duty. And indeed crimes of this nature are sometimes punished with a severity capable of terrifying ignorance or injustice. But these are only general remarks. We must enter into some detail.

The code which is now followed in the kingdom of Denmark, and which scarcely differs from that of Norway, except in matters relative to the game, to the fishery, and to the manner of possessing lands, was published by Christian the fifth, who reduced into one body the several laws which had been hitherto in force. They had had already the advantage of being wrote in the language of the country ; but this prince in rendring jurisprudence uniform throughout his dominions, brought it still nearer to perfection.

Foreigners

Foreigners in general agree in their praises on the excellency of the danish laws; but I know of none who have given any particular account of them. I shall therefore take a pleasure, Sir, in satisfying in some measure your curiosity upon a subject which is too extensive to be exhausted in the course of a few letters.

What must prejudice one in favor of these laws, is the small number of law-suits that arise, the readiness with which these disputes are determined, and the manner according to which jurisprudence is commonly considered here. Elsewhere it is looked upon as an art that requires in the lawyer and the judge the most serious studies, and a constant application for many years. Here it is often asserted, that every member of the state is able to understand the laws, and to defend or to judge his countrymen.

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I must own that this pretension to me appears exaggerated; and that it belongs alone, I should imagine, to minds naturally upright, and assisted with all the power of study and reflection to seize the true spirit of laws, and to make a proper application of them. But however, it cannot be denied that this opinion of the Danes has some foundation in it; and that we can seek for no where, but in the simplicity of their laws. Adapted to the present manners and affairs of Europe, they are free from those arbitrary principles and suppositions, from which the roman code, however valuable in other respects, is not always exempt; and those fictions giving room to dispositions of a like nature, throw jurisprudence into great obscurity and confusion. You will find, by what I shall mention in the sequel of these letters, that the legislature has stopt the source of several disputes, by permitting

mitting many ancient customs to subsist which date their origin from the simplicity of the first ages. If you had an opportunity of judging of the expression of the laws of this country, I make no doubt but you would reckon their clearness and precision among their other excellencies.

The danish code is divided into six books. The first treats of the manner of proceeding in the courts of law; the second, of ecclesiastical government; the third, of the offices and state of divers persons; the fourth, of the maritime law; the fifth, of the different manner of acquiring property, and of contracts; and the sixth, of crimes and their several punishments.

I shall begin by giving a general idea of the method of proceeding in the courts of law. There are in this country as elsewhere various kinds of

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juris-

jurisdiction, that of the king and of the nobility, that of the clergy, the consistorial jurisdiction, and those to whom people belonging to the army or navy have recourse. I shall mention each of these hereafter in some detail; for the present I confine myself to the civil jurisdiction, of which the consistorial makes a part, for since the reformation, marriage is become a mere civil contract, respecting which, the ecclesiastics have no more authority than over any other temporal affair. The king's lieutenants, together with some assistants who are chosen among those of most knowledge in the diocese, judge all matrimonial causes; and an appeal from their decree must be brought before the supreme court of Denmark. In Zealand alone, the members of the consistory are fixed by law, and these are the professors of the university of Copenhagen; among them there are
some

some clergymen; but it is not as such, that they take their place. The governor of the island presides at this assembly, from whose decrees there is also a right of appeal to the supreme court of the kingdom.

The civil jurisdiction belongs in its whole extent to the king, and it is only by his particular grant that the lords have a right to appoint a judge; but as this judge must be confirmed by his majesty, and as justice must be administered in his name, one may very well say, there is no other jurisdiction here than that of the prince. It is divided into three degrees. The first in the towns before a judge appointed by the king, called *byefoged*, and in the country also before a judge named by the king, or by the lords, called *herretsfoged*, or *birkedommer*, who renders justice in presence of eight peasants that are witnesses and observers of his conduct. An ap-

appeal from the decision of the byefoged
 in the great towns is brought before
 the magistrates of these towns; but
 from that of the judges in the country,
 there is a right of appealing to the
 provincial court, except in the juris-
 diction of earls or barons, which de-
 pends immediately upon the sovereign
 tribunal of the kingdom. The pro-
 vincial court is composed of judges
 appointed by his majesty, who re-
 main assembled every month as long
 as it is necessary to decide the causes
 that are submitted to their determi-
 nation *. From their judgment an
 ap-

* It must be remarked, that in Norway an
 appeal from the decisions of the provincial
 courts, from those of the magistrates of towns,
 or the king's lieutenant and assistants, in causes
 relating to marriage, is brought before a superior
 court resident at Christiania. The viceroy is
 president of this tribunal, and in his absence, his
 deputy, or the governor of Aggerhuss. The
 other members are twelve or fifteen assistants,
 of whom five at least must be present to render
 their determinations valid. The parties who
 suppose

appeal is liable to be brought before the supreme court, which is also composed of judges appointed by the king. Their number is not fixed; but there must be nine at least, to give to their sentence the force of a decree, or even to begin the examination of an affair. Some of these serve the whole year, others during particular months. The provincial judges and those of the supreme court are paid by his majesty, which, by lessening the fees to a very trifle, puts it in the power of the poorest subjects to prosecute the recovery of their rights, and adds besides to the dignity of one of the most noble functions in society.

Such are the ordinary courts of judicature in this kingdom. They de-

suppose themselves injured may appeal from the superior court of Norway, to the supreme tribunal of both kingdoms which resides at Copenhagen.

cide all criminal and civil causes. Both are treated according to the same method of proceeding, even to the sovereign tribunal, to which all other jurisdictions tend as to a common center, and which pronounces always in the last resort, from whatever court the appeal be brought, except what concerns the army, fleet, or revenue; for it is remarkable that the board of exchequer judges exclusively of any other tribunal, and without appeal in all disputes concerning taxes levied by the king, or contracts entered into with him; as well as by appeal in disputes relating to the customs.

Nothing is more in the character of a monarchy than to grant distinctions to particular persons; and one of those which has flattered most the minds of men, is, not to be under the jurisdiction of the common magistrate. Thus the earls and barons of Denmark

mark in cases that regard them personally, are subject only to the supreme court. All those who are in the king's service, or who have received some mark of honor from his bounty, belong, while they remain at Copenhagen, to a particular tribunal that resides in the capital, and is called the aulic council, or *hof rett*. The injured may appeal from its decrees to the supreme court. His majesty's inferior officers, as well as the domestics of his household, are in the jurisdiction of a court named *borg rett*, from whose sentences appeals are brought before the aulic council; and gentlemen by birth, or those who by titles or employments enjoy the privileges of such, can be tried only by the supreme court, in matters which concern their life or honor. The professors of the university, and the students are subject only to the consistory. Causes are sometimes transferred from the common courts of

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justice,

justice, in order to be tried by commissioners named for that purpose. But be not affrighted at this proceeding; commissions can never pronounce a final decree. There is always a right of appeal to the supreme court. Nor are they ever granted but at the request of one of the parties. The commissioners are equally chosen by both. They are never appointed in criminal matters, except in some particular cases, as in Norway, where there otherwise would be great inconveniencies attending the number of courts, from each of which there subsists a right of appealing to the others. And even in these circumstances, the judgment of the commissioners is subject to be revised by the sovereign tribunal, which is the only judge in the last resort of the lives, fortunes, and honor of all the subjects.

How very true I should say, I am very well satisfied with which I am very well satisfied, and I never heard that there

All

All law-suits begin by a summons. This is done in writing, or in the presence of two witnesses. It must contain the demands of the plaintiff; the defendant answers also in writing. Each produces his proofs and witnesses to the court, in order to be examined upon the facts that are disputed, and when the respective writings seem sufficient to the judge to clear up the affair, the cause is determined, and the sentence pronounced, without pleading on either side. In a country where the proceedings in the courts of law seem to have been rendered so very simple, I have been often surprised that, to the many wise precautions which have been taken in order to dispatch the decision of law-suits, that of fixing the number of writings has not also been added. It is confined to four in a country, with which I am very well acquainted; and I never heard that there

there happened any law-suits in which this limitation deprived the judges of a sufficient knowledge of the cause.

When a decree is granted, the liberty of appealing to the provincial court is limited to six months. Here the appellant offers up his grievances, and it sometimes, tho seldom, happens, that the writings are multiplied. I am of opinion, that in any case whatsoever it should never be allowed to each party to produce above one piece in writing, the one containing the complaints of the appellant, and the other the defence of the respondent.

If there be an appeal brought from the provincial court, it must be laid before the sovereign tribunal at farthest within a year and six weeks after the sentence is pronounced, if the cause be depending in Denmark; and, if in Norway, within eighteen months.

months. The supreme court is the only tribunal where pleading is permitted. There can be no pretence for opposing a sentence when pronounced by this sovereign court. No revisions are allowed, being considered as an abuse which tends, under the specious pretext of amendment, only to revive or perpetuate law-suits, and becoming, by this means, a greater misfortune than the injustice originally complained of.

Execution is immediately granted against the goods and person of him who is cast. And, what causes still greater expedition, the judge at the time he gives his decree, is obliged to regulate the costs of the law-suit, as well as the lawyer's fees, a precaution not less necessary than the first.

If any part of the legislature can give you a true idea of the spirit of this government, it must be the method

thod of proceeding in the trial, and the punishment of criminals. And this consideration is an additional motive which prompts me to give you an account of it.

All criminal causes are tried here in the same manner as the civil ones. He, in whose jurisdiction a crime is committed, appoints a lawyer to carry on the prosecution, and also names another to defend the person who is accused. If this last be not agreeable to the prisoner, he may chuse another on making application to the king. By this method, the sovereign, not being willing to prosecute his subjects in his own name, leaves to society the care of punishing the crimes that are committed against it. The two lawyers being appointed, the caused is tried, and the sentence pronounced soon after. An appeal is, in consequence, brought before the provincial court, and from
 2 thence

thence to the supreme court, unless the prisoner chuses otherwise, for upon each determination his sentence is read to him, that he may enjoy the benefit of appealing. And tho he should renounce this privilege, if he be condemned to lose his life, or be publicly whipped, an appeal must of course be brought to the provincial court, and no sentence of death can be put in execution, as I have already observed to you, without a particular warrant from his majesty.

But there are other practises peculiar to the criminal proceedings in this country, which I ought to pass over, by no means, in silence.

If the Danes had not formerly given laws to England, I should be more surpris'd than I now am, at the remarkable relation which subsists to this day between the laws of these two kingdoms. In cases of murder

der and in the settling of boundaries, the law enacts that an extraordinary court be held, composed of eight persons, called in the act, *Sandemaend*, or *men of truth*, who, like the jurymen of England, give their opinion upon oath, with regard to the fact submitted to their examination. This office, which is only held for the object then in debate, is transferable to all those who compose the community. But this still is not the most striking resemblance between the danish laws and those of the most free people that now exist. We have here a full, or, very near, a full equivalent of that famous law of *habeas corpus*, which the English very justly regard as one of the surest bulwarks of their liberty. The first article of the nineteenth chapter of the first book of the code of Denmark contains these words: *No man can be put in prison unless he be detected in the very commission of a crime*

crime which is subject to capital or corporal punishment, or unless he hath confessed the fact before a magistrate, or be found guilty of it in a court of justice. And those who are accused, may, by giving security, come and go away freely from the tribunal, and enjoy all the liberty necessary for their defence. This law and the one which prohibits torture, are remarkable instances of the moderation of the legislator and of the government. This is taking all possible care of innocence. But can there be too many methods devised to secure it? And tho guilt will sometimes avail itself of that protection which was never intended to favor it, what room is there to be alarmed at such a momentary usurpation, especially in a government where the coercive power is of sufficient strength to provide against any future fatal relaxation? I conclude, for I have already long passed the bounds of a moderate letter, and shall only add,

add, that, except in cases of high treason, the lands of the guilty are not liable to be confiscated, but are enjoyed by the natural heirs.

Would you have expected, Sir, to find in a monarchy, laws, which even republics do not enjoy, or which they have only obtained after the most violent and destructive struggles? Laws so humane, so mild, so honorable to the subject, must contribute to render that monarch beloved from whom they are held; and they are a proof at the same time of the confidence which the sovereign places in his people, and of *their* attachment towards him. Happy union! in which the perfection of monarchic government must always consist.

I remain, SIR,

Your very humble Servant.

LET-

LETTER the Fourth.

To the same.

SIR,

THE second book of the danish code contains the ecclesiastic or canon law. Lutheranism is the only religion authorized; but by the spirit of moderation which distinguishes this government, every other sect is tolerated in it. The roman-catholics even enjoy several privileges which are denied them in other protestant countries, and the presbyterians, who have almost obtained the public establishment of their worship, are admitted to partake of the employments and honors of the state.

The king exercises, like all protestant princes, the right of supremacy

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in his dominions. He pronounces in the last resort upon all matters concerning the government of the church, and the form of worship. He confers the chief ecclesiastical dignities, and disposes of several livings which are in his gift. In other respects the church-government seems to me to partake partly of the english hierarchy, and partly of the presbyterian discipline. On the one hand, I meet with bishops or superintendants, whose authority indeed confined entirely to spiritual matters, consists in the power of ordaining priests, and in that of overseeing their conduct; and, on the other hand, I find in every parish an institution calculated for the reformation of manners, which is not unlike the consistory of the calvinists. I must own this mixture appears to me extremely happy. Ecclesiastical government should imitate the civil. And as a large kingdom cannot do without great offices and employments,

ployments, so it is difficult to maintain true order and harmony in the churches of an extensive empire, without a superior authority to preside over it. I am conscious of the evils that have been produced by ecclesiastic power; but they were evils which happened when it had passed the due limits it was prescribed. As it is merely intended for the support of religion, it must be from thence only it should borrow the arms which it has a right to use; and while we remember that persuasion is the only method now left open to it for extending the dominion of truth and virtue, there will be found no cause of being afraid that it has been entrusted with a dangerous authority. That of the bishops of these kingdoms can never be so. Deprived of all temporal jurisdiction, as well as of all dominion over the consciences of the people, they have no other rights than

those which are necessary to preserve order and decency in the church, and to advance the progress of religion. They confer the order of priesthood; but the candidates before they can be presented to the bishop, must undergo a public examination before the professors of divinity of the university of Copenhagen. The bishops are empowered to oversee the conduct of the clergy of their diocese, whom they must visit at least every three years: in this visitation they are to examine the schools, inspect the accounts of the poor-money, take care that it be faithfully administered, and that the churches and curacies be properly kept in order. They are obliged to examine the conduct of the rectors of parishes, to exhort and reprimand them, to punish them by fines when it becomes necessary, or even to suspend them; but their jurisdiction goes no farther: and even their

their sentence in this last instance is liable to be reversed by the supreme court of the kingdom.

The legislature has not stop't here in the precautions it has taken to prevent the relaxation of the ministers of the gospel. It was apprehended that priests who were far removed from the vigilance of bishops, might abuse the kind of independance in which a distance from the metropolis should place them; and in order to remedy this inconvenience, each bishop has several vicar generals in his diocese who serve as his deputies. The dioceses are divided into different districts, each of which contains several parishes. To every district is appointed as inspector, an archpriest under the name of *provost*, whose attention is fixed on all those objects which are in the jurisdiction of the bishop. These archpriests,

elected by the majority of rectors of
 the respective districts, are their first
 and immediate judges, together with
 two assistants whom they chuse a-
 mong the clergy of that part of the
 diocese, in all matters relating to the
 exercise of their functions. They
 are the general executors of the wills
 of deceased vicars; they take care
 that the school-masters perform pro-
 perly their duty; they inspect the
 management of the poor-money, and
 provide for the maintenance and re-
 pair of the churches. Twice a year
 they are to assemble in order to deli-
 berate upon the ecclesiastical affairs
 of the diocese. The bishop presides
 at this synod, and the governor assists
 there also, in the name of the king.
 This assembly is the second ecclesiastical
 jurisdiction, and takes cogni-
 zance of faults committed in the
 exercise of their functions by any of
 the clergy, except the bishops, who
 in

in criminal cases are subject only to the supreme court; on which extraordinary occasions, two bishops are allowed to assist as judges at that tribunal. In civil causes whether real or personal, ecclesiastics must have recourse to the common jurisdiction. Every archpriest must communicate to the vicars in his district the resolutions that have been taken at the synod. Such measures are very capable of maintaining among the clergy that decency and regularity which are the distinctive characters of the profession, and of gaining them that esteem which all good men must wish them to enjoy. Justly merited esteem will always procure to pastors a great influence over the morals of their flock. It will also serve to give some weight to the institution established for the reformation of manners; and which I have already compared to the con-

history of the calvinists; but without giving any further description of it, at that time. This I now undertake. It is enacted by law that an assembly be formed in every parish, composed of the principal parishioners, over whom the pastor must be president. This assembly is entrusted with the care of maintaining purity in the morals of the people; and of repressing such disorders as are not punishable by law, tho' not the less fatal to society. They may fine those who resist their authority, and even proceed against them as far as excommunication, having previously taken the advice of the bishop and archpriest. But this is not the only curb that the legislature has put to an authority, the exercise of which requires such great circumspection: an appeal also may be brought from its sentences to the supreme court. Thus is established

between

between the ecclesiastic and civil power, that balance, which so many nations were formerly desirous of obtaining, and sigh after in vain to this day.

I should be far from fulfilling the design of this letter, were I to mention nothing concerning the election of ministers of parishes. The king names to most of the curacies of Norway, where very few lordships at present remain; and in the rest of his dominions, he has, as patron, the right of presenting to a great number of livings. The others are in the disposal of patrons who either are lords of the manor where the parish is situated, and are noble or enjoy the privileges of such; or else are persons who have acquired separately the right of presentation. For it seems, Sir, that when this country adopted the reformation, the king thought

thought proper to alienate the tythes which belonged to the clergy in favor of those who were willing to purchase them, under the condition of maintaining the churches, and with a right of filling up the vacant curacies. As the lords were not the only persons who entered into this agreement, it has happened that the right of presentation is lodged in other hands as well as theirs, tho they take every opportunity of uniting this to the other privileges they enjoy. When the rector of a parish dies or is preferred, the bishop of the diocese informs his majesty of the vacancy, if the living be in his gift, mentioning at the same time those who are ready to fill it up, who on their side take care to present their respective petitions to the king. After this, the secretary of state for home-affairs draws up an abstract of these several memorials for the use of his
ma-

majesty, who fixes upon the candidate that seems best qualified for the purpose. And what conduces much to an exact determination in this point, is the account that the professors of divinity are obliged to send every year to chancery of the behavior and progress of the several students educated at Copenhagen. The bishops are bound to do the same with regard to those who live in their dioceses. When this nomination of his majesty, or of a private patron is made known to the royal chancery, the archpriest, in whose district the parish lies, gets the chosen candidate to preach before his flock. The parishioners are then authorised to offer their objections against him, provided they are of a nature to be alleged and proved in a court of judicature. The bishop lays before his majesty the motives of their opposition, who considers their complaints.

plaints. But if the dispute should happen to arise between a private patron and the parishioners, the cause is brought before the common courts of justice, and by them decided. If, on the other hand, the candidate is approved of by the flock, it only remains for him to wait on the bishop, who examines, and ordains him, if he finds him properly qualified; for in these kingdoms no man is priested until he is appointed to a living.

The revenues of the clergy are proportioned to the rank which the law allows them in the state. They have a decent, not an extravagant maintenance. Their chief support consists in the produce of the tythes. These are divided into three parts, of which one goes to the king, one towards the maintenance of the churches, and the third to the curates;

rates; the revenue of the bishops is taken from the portion allotted to the king. I said such was the *chief* support of the clergy; for they have also other resources. The pastors of parishes receive at each of the three solemn festivals of the year an offering from their parishioners, the value of which is not determined, but which they are obliged to make of some sort. And in these offerings the principal revenue of town-rectors consist; marriage and baptism is also another source of gain, which indeed is neither considerable nor burdensome, but for which however it were to be wished, an equivalent could be found of another kind. I do not reckon among the profits of the clergy the produce of funeral sermons, because that custom is now growing obsolete. Good-sense, which seems to extend its dominion wider every day, makes people sensible of the futility and emptiness of a purchased pane-

panegyric, as well as the unbecomingness of flattery, at a time when truth should appear in all its dreaded severity and awe.

It would be tedious to mention all the measures that have been taken to turn to the best account the revenues that are allotted for the support of the poor and of the churches. Such a detail would carry me too far. The regulations themselves can alone give a just idea of the prudence and economy by which they were dictated. I shall content myself with observing with how much justice and reason the widows of pastors are allowed the eighth part of the revenue which their husbands enjoyed. There is besides in every diocese a fund from whence the widows of clergymen are paid an annual sum proportioned to that which their husbands contributed towards it, before they died. This is not the only place where I shall have

have occasion to mention establishments of this nature. They are in great number in this country, and serve to shew the character and turn of its inhabitants. You shall have a more particular account of them in the sequel. In the mean time I conclude, Sir, with the assurances of the sentiments of esteem, with which

I am, &c.

LET-

LETTER the Fifth.

To the same.

IN continuance of the object of my task, I propose giving you, Sir, in this letter, some idea of the third book of the danish code. It relates to the condition of the different persons of which society is composed, to the privileges of those who are constituted in dignity or office, to the administration and civil government of towns. I shall always pass over, as I have hitherto done, every thing which is agreeable to all civil law and common to other nations, mentioning only what is peculiar to this country.

The provinces, I have already told you, are governed by lieutenants. Some under the title of lord lieutenants,

nants, have all the towns of a province subject to their authority. Others divide among them the several districts of the country *. They are bound to watch against all frauds committed in their respective departments to the disadvantage of the sovereign; they see his orders executed, and send exact accounts of the state of things in those cases wherein he alone is to determine; but in all other respects they are deprived of every kind of jurisdiction, except in matrimonial cases; and this I chuse to repeat, because the more I examine the constitution of societies, the more evident it appears to me, what has been already observed by the celebrated Montesquieu, that the surest

* The two kingdoms are divided into dioceses [*Stifter*], and the dioceses into bailiwicks [*Amter*]. The lord-lieutenants or high-bailiffs, called *Stifts Amt-Mand*, have all the towns of a diocese under their inspection. The other lieutenants govern the villages and rest of the country.

remedy against the abuse of authority is the dividing of power. The lieutenants are also particularly charged to protect the peasants, and in cases of succession to distribute the inheritance.

The municipal government of every town rests in the common council, which also determines, in causes brought before it by appeal. And tho it be a subordinate authority, and limited to particular objects, it gives me room however to put you in mind of an observation I have already made elsewhere: which is, that the more resistance the torrent of authority is liable to meet with, the easier it may reflect upon itself, and be directed to the proper object. These councils settle the assessment of the taxes to be paid by the towns for the public service, according to rules which are purposely laid down in

in order to prevent arbitrary or unjust decisions. This shall be the subject of another letter. You are probably more impatient at present to become acquainted with that, which makes the principal difference between this country and yours, I mean the condition of the peasants.

Their liberty is indeed much confined in the kingdom of Denmark ; in Norway they are on a very different footing. However, the state of all the danish peasants is not alike. I believe it will be necessary to go as far back as the revolution of one thousand six hundred and sixty, in order to be more exact in my description.

Before that period, the nobility enjoyed, in the estates where they resided, an exemption from tythes and taxes, which had no other limits than those of their power or their influence.

ence. These lands were known in that country under the name of *Sæde Gaarde*. They could be possessed but by noblemen; and besides the useful and real privileges which I have mentioned to have been annexed to their possession, they also enjoyed several honorary rights which were not every where the same.

A revolution so calmly brought about as that of one thousand six hundred and sixty, could be productive of no great changes in the condition of individuals: nor was there any in the fortunes of the nobility. The government in reducing the immunities of their lands to just and moderate bounds, did nothing more than bring back the noblemen to their duty as citizens, who must contribute their share towards the expences of the state, without destroying those distinctions to which they had an undisputed right. They continued

tinued free from the payment of tythes; and tho their tenants were equally subjected to taxes with other peasants, they were exempted themselves from paying any for the land which they cultivated on their own account; provided however that they had let out besides two hundred tuns of *bart-korn** to be cultivated for the advantage of their peasants.

This regulation was founded on the necessity of fixing some bounds to exemptions, which were become more especially burdensome to the state in troublesome times. Such is the first kind of noble lands in the kingdom of Denmark. They were the estates on which the nobility resided at the revolution of one

* The tun of *bart-korn* is an imaginary measure, generally valued at about one hundred and twenty thousand square feet of arable land; or otherwise, a tract of ground in which may be sown a tun of wheat, a tun of rye, and a tun of oats.

thousand six hundred and sixty, and are all registered in records designed for that purpose, which determine their number; with a provision made by a late act, that each nobleman set at least two hundred tuns of hart-korn, situated not above two miles from his seat or country residence. Another kind of noble possessions are those which have been declared such since the revolution, and enjoy every privilege of those already described, except an exemption from tythes, which could not be granted but at the expence of the church. At present private gentlemen when honored with particular titles are allowed to possess, as well as noblemen by birth, these different untaxed lands; and therefore it would be more exact to distinguish all landed property into privileged and unprivileged estates. In this last division, the lord of the manor, even for what he keeps in his

his own hands, is subject to the land-tax.

It remains to enter into some detail with regard to these possessions; and I begin by the honorary rights. The lords of the manor, if you except the earls and barons, exercise no kind of jurisdiction, but by a particular grant from the king, from whom derives all judicial power throughout his dominions. The few to whom he makes any such grant, are obliged to have the judges they appoint confirmed by him, and justice rendered in his name.

However, every lord of the manor has a kind of limited jurisdiction over his peasants. He has a right to a part of the fines to which they are condemned. He divides their succession among their heirs, as whatever the peasant can acquire, after paying

his rent and taxes, becomes his private property.

So far *every* possessor of landed property is entitled. But noblemen alone, or such as enjoy the prerogatives of nobility, can appoint a judge, or present to a living. If any other person should acquire an estate to which these privileges are annexed, the king enjoys them until the possessor of the land be a nobleman, or one enjoying the prerogatives of noblemen.

The right of presentation sometimes follows the possession of particular lands; but as I have already given you an account of its nature and origin in my letter concerning ecclesiastic discipline, I shall mention nothing relative to it at present. I now proceed to the useful privileges that noblemen enjoy, and shall begin by that of the game, which
seems

seems to hold a middle place between real and honorary rights.

Every lord of the manor that is noble may hunt not only in the extent of his own estate, but also in all those lands which he possesses in common with others, for two miles round about the place of his residence; whereas other persons are confined within the limits of their own possessions. But what makes the most considerable advantage of the lords of the manor in this country, is, that the property also of the ground is generally in their hands. I say, for the most part, because there are some peasants who have purchased lands. These purchasers are of two kinds. Some have acquired an entire and absolute property, others pay an annual rent.

These last may be dispossessed of their lands when they suffer them to be
be

bedspoiled or destroyed for want of proper care and tillage, and in this case the fee-farm lease must be offered to the next relation, on his paying the value of it. If he refuses, the ground is publicly sold, and the landlord has only the right of preference. What remains after having paid the peasant's debts must be returned to him. He joins to this advantage that of being subject only to a quarter of the average which the absolute purchaser is obliged to perform.

The rest of the peasants are merely farmers of the land they live upon; and the contract into which they enter with the landlord regulates the annual rent which they are to pay in provisions and in money. Besides, every landlord retains a part of his estate in his own possession, and this his peasants are obliged to cultivate at his discretion. It were to be wished,

wished, that in addition to the other precautions the legislature has taken to prevent the oppression of the peasants, it had also been enacted that the average or labor which they are obliged to perform for their landlord, should be specified and determined in the contract. This lease for which the holder generally pays a fine, is always granted for his life, and cannot be broke thro by the landlord, unless he intends the land for his own private use, or that the tenant destroys the ground, or neglects to pay his rent. The lord of the manor was formerly allowed to take from the peasant any part of his property, upon paying him the value of it; but this privilege which tended to diminish the number of tillers, and to encrease the labor of the rest, has been wisely abolished.

The tenant has also the liberty, upon certain occasions, to surrender

his lease. The general expressions of the law hinder me from being exactly informed how far this liberty may extend. It is supposed in fact however, that the peasant cannot dissolve the contract but when his change of circumstances render it impossible for him to cultivate the farm he tenanted. When he dies, his widow holds the land upon the same conditions, while she remains unmarried; and if the landlord takes it to himself he is obliged to see the children, if any, provided for at his expence.

Before the reign of Frederic the fourth, the peasants of Denmark were slaves. But this prince, ambitious of the glory of commanding free men, took the resolution to abolish servitude. To fulfil this design he published the famous edict of the year one thousand seven hundred and two, by which it is enacted that there should be no more vassals for
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the future bound to the glebe (*Vor-
neder*) throughout his dominions. Be-
fore he brought about so great a
change, he thought it necessary to
take the precautions that were pro-
per to prevent the peasants, flushed
with this new idea of liberty, from
abandoning the culture of the earth.
For this purpose therefore, as well as
to encrease the forces of the state, he
instituted a national militia, by an
edict of the twenty-first of February
one thousand seven hundred and one.
And by another of the thirtieth of
December one thousand seven hun-
dred and two, it is enacted that all
boys born on the same estate must be
registered in the rolls of the militia,
from the age of fourteen * to that of
thirty-five; and from that period
they must not quit their habitation,

* The edict of the twelfth of October one
thousand seven hundred and forty-two, has
changed the age of fourteen to that of nine.

where the service of the state obliges them to remain. Thus is the peasant confined to the culture of the earth but from motives which must seem much nobler in his eyes, and which, at the same time, redound to the advantage of the kingdom.

The spirit of this law has been preserved in all those which have been since made. It is unnecessary to give a particular description of these; suffice it to say, that every landlord registers in the roll of the militia all the peasants that are born upon his lands, from the age of nine years old, from which time to the age of forty they are obliged as soldiers to remain in the same place. From this multitude of people of all ages, the landlord furnishes for every hundred and twenty tuns of *hart-korn* two men for the militia, and one for the reserve. The difference between these consists in the militia
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man's having soldier's cloaths, the other, none. I shall be more particular with regard to these several institutions, when I give you an account of the military state of this country. I consider them here only with regard to the authority which they give the landlord over his tenants; and under this head it must be remarked, that he is master to name as soldiers in the number which he is to furnish, those peasants whom he pleases to appoint; to take these back again, and send in their room others whom he is displeased with; to enlist in his majesty's troops any one of his peasants, who, after having served the allotted time in the militia, does not chuse to become his tenant; and, lastly, to make a man serve to the age of forty-five in the militia, who has been deprived of his farm thro' negligence in the cultivation of it.

Thus

Thus you see, Sir, the state of the peasants in the kingdom of Denmark. They are not bondmen indeed, but however are confined to agriculture, and remain dependant on their landlord.

Destitute for the most part of all property, they possess merely as farmers the lands which they cultivate. This condition will probably appear to you destructive of industry and populousness; and I must own to you, that property seems to me a much more active principle than the continual inspection of an overseer. It is much surer to trust to the desire of gain in *many*, than to the care of *one* who may mistake or neglect his interest; and perhaps it is to property that emulation is chiefly indebted for those endeavors which surmount so many difficulties, and are attended with such advantages to the state. Notwithstanding

withstanding this, when we consider the abuses that are made of its liberty by an order of people naturally ignorant and unpolished, it may admit of some doubt whether we ought to blame with so much severity those laws which render the peasants subject to the power of a man, whom every motive should deter from abusing his authority. And you must not imagin that the legislature has absolutely delivered up the tenant to the discretion of his landlord. One of the principal duties of the lieutenants, is to hinder their oppression. Any peasant who thinks himself injured has a right to lay before this officer his complaint; and if by his mediation alone justice cannot be obtained, he then appoints for the peasant a lawyer to plead his cause gratis, before the courts of judicature, where peasants are not subject to the least expence.

No tenant can be turned out of his farm against his will, without an order from the ordinary court of justice, from whence he may appeal to the superior tribunals. It must be by course of law that a landlord can have his peasants punished, of what nature soever be their crime; and they have a right to appeal from the ordinary jurisdiction to the supreme court. You must also remember that the landlord is accountable to the king for every one of his peasants; this prevents the vexations of collectors too often fond of distressing the poor, and at the same time forces the landlord, unless he be blind to his most manifest interests, to use his tenants well, who might otherwise, by spoiling or abandoning his estate, leave him oppressed with a load which he is, alone, unable to support.

After all these precautions capable
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of satisfying the most tender fears of humanity, I think it may be urged, besides, in favor, or at least in excuse, of this system, that it tends to the preservation and encouragement of agriculture; which is perhaps every where too much abandoned by the people of the country, since the luxury of towns opens to them, in the arts destined for its entertainment, several resources more pleasing to their pride, and agreeable to their disposition towards idleness. They who are well acquainted with this country, pretend, that, as it lies so convenient on every side for navigation, the peasants induced by the profits which are made, during the summer-season by seafaring men, and by the repose which they enjoy the whole winter, would certainly leave off tilling the ground, and change their way of livelihood if they had not been confined to it by law. I do not mean to examine these considerations, because I am

sensible how much more knowledge than I am possessed of, is requisite to discuss a question so complicated and combined. I cannot however avoid wishing that the king, whose attention is equally carried to every point that concerns the prosperity of his subjects, would please to try in his own domain the success of rendering the peasants proprietors instead of farmers, of the land they cultivate. It would soon appear, especially if this essay was made in lands of several different qualities, how such a change affected the improvement of agriculture, and the populousness of the nation. If it was attended with happy effects, the landlords would soon follow an example so conducive to their own interest ; for thus they would substitute in the room of the fatigue and uncertainties of their present management and economy, a fixed rent, for which the natural attachment inherent

herent in every man towards his own property, would be more than sufficient security.

I hope I have at present satisfied in some measure your curiosity with regard to the two most important states of society. It remains to give you some account of the peasants of Norway, whose singular situation merits your attention.

In this great extent of ground there remain very few noblemen. And those that possess at present privileged estates, have in their dependence peasants who are all landowners. Such estates being in a very small number, the remainder of the peasants of Norway not only are absolute possessors of all the lands, but they enjoy, besides, the right of game, and are subject to no other controul or jurisdiction but that of the king.

But this is not all: and what I am going to mention seems to me remarkable. These peasants hold their lands by way of *feoffment in trust* (Odels gaarde) which is transmitted from father to son to the eldest of the family, and so on without gavelling, * to the nearest in kindred, with this condition that sons are always preferred to daughters, and the eldest to the youngest. I said a feoffment in trust, tho, properly speaking, it does not deserve that name; for the proprietor has a liberty of selling his estate; but this sale is not irrevocable. Lands thus mortgaged, as I may express it, are subject to a power of redemption for the space of twenty years, which belongs to the next re-

* The eldest son who possesses the estate is however obliged to give portions to his brothers and sisters; but if there be several estates, the eldest son is heir to the principal one; and the younger children divide the others among them.

lation,

lation, and may be put in execution any time before it has been twenty years in the possession of any one family ; but he that chuses to make use of such a right must declare his intention immediately after the sale, and return the purchase-money before the expiration of the twenty years. This prerogative which contributes to keep up families, leaves property in an uncertainty that must necessarily hurt agriculture, and check the improvement of land.

After these details little more would remain to trouble you with, on this subject, were I not struck with another establishment which may serve to mark the spirit of regularity and order which dictated the laws of this country.

What I mean is a kind of CENSURE exercised in every town by men appointed by the magistrates among the

principal citizens, in order to oversee the education of children, and the proper administration of the fortune of orphans. You must not suspect that this is mere form. They are expressly and positively commanded by law to take care of all such children as are neglected by their parents, and to breed them up to some useful profession. The expences of education are to be taken from the fortune of the parents, and when this is not sufficient, from the funds remaining in the houses of charity. We cannot avoid praising so wise an institution, and such excellent regulations, when we consider the numberless evils which are produced in a state by idleness, that corroding gangrene always so ready to spring up and enlarge, unless every infected spot be radically cut away. What deserves not less our encomiums, is the care which those censors are also obliged to take of the administration of the property of orphans.

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They are rendered accountable for every mismanagement, and this is the surest method to call their closest attention to this object. So careful the legislature is of orphans, that the magistrates are obliged to oversee the conduct and accounts of the censors in this respect. And for the greater protection of their persons and fortunes, from the moment they become in danger, it is enjoined to all those who happen to be in a family where a father dies, leaving children under age, to inform the magistrate immediately of such an event, under the penalty of a considerable fine ; and the same is observed with equal exactness, every time any of the natural heirs is a minor, or is absent.

The laws of this country allow not of guardians appointed by the will of the testator. The guardianship must, by order of the legislature, be in the hands of the next akin ;

kin ; and when this cannot be put in practice, a guardian is appointed by the civil magistrate. It was thought that orphans could not be in better hands than in those of their nearest relations ; and this will remain true in every country, where morals have preserved their purity. Women are always considered in this country as minors by the legislature. They that are married have their husbands for guardians. The fortunes of widows are in the possession of trustees.

I remain, S I R,

Yours, &c.

L E T-

LETTER the Sixth.

To the same.

SIR,

TH O I am unable to compare the fourth book of the danish code with the laws of other maritim powers, I shall however give you some account of it separately in this letter. A branch of business so widely differing from all others, requires regulations peculiar to itself, and must, even on that score, be worthy of your curiosity and attention.

All obligations of owners of ships, of captains, of merchants and of sailors, are, indeed, principally founded on the contracts which they enter into among themselves ; but the legislature, to whose care are entrusted
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the joint interests of trade and navigation, must apply to that liberty all the modifications which such important objects require.

Thus it has empowered the commanders of trading vessels to leave behind them on foreign shores those among their crew, who had been guilty of sedition or premeditated disobedience during the voyage. From the same motive it has been enacted, that every sailor who would abandon his ship when wrecked, or attacked by pirates, should be punishable by death; as well as every pilot by whose ignorance or neglect the loss of a ship was occasioned, when his fortune is insufficient to pay the damages he caused. Attention has been paid to the very amusements of the officers and men. Both are equally forbid to game at sea. In a word, the legislature has ordained every thing which the interest
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of navigation could require to be mentioned in the private contracts that are made with sailors. There are even cases where the law, preferring the general benefit of commerce to the private advantage of a ship's crew, dispenses the captain from observing with exactness the agreement he had entered into with them. Such is that where the interest of the owners makes it necessary for the commander to sail to places different from those which he had first designed, when he took his sailors into pay; he may, upon such occasions, direct his course to that port where he has reason to expect his cargo may be disposed of to most advantage.

But what is still more opposite to the received notions with regard to contracts is, that the captain of a ship when at a loss for money, is allowed to sell as much of the cargo as
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is necessary to supply his wants, accounting afterwards for the same upon the freight of the whole. How singular soever this disposition may at first appear, it is agreeable notwithstanding to the supposed intention of the merchant.

These examples are probably sufficient to let you see the spirit of the laws in all such matters. Private contracts stand good in every circumstance where the superior interest of commerce and navigation require no particular regulations to be made. I shall only add, and that but lightly too, what has been enacted with regard to the accidents that happen upon that ungovernable element the sea; and for which it were the highest injustice to make men, in any way answerable. When two ships fall foul upon each other, without any fault of the crew of either, the damages that are occasioned must

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be equally supported by both: nothing can be more agreeable, methinks, to the true principles of equity.

These principles are likewise conspicuous in the laws relative to salvages, which ordain, that the damage suffered by any particular merchandize for the preservation of the whole, must be divided among the entire cargo, including the vessel also when its preservation has been partly the motive of sustaining such a loss. But, above all, I believe you will admire, Sir, as I do, the great humanity of the danish laws in matters relating to shipwrecks. They have no notion here of that barbarous and cruel custom which confiscated the remaining wreck to the use of him who had the jurisdiction of the coasts. The right of property is not destroyed in this country by a misfortune which should have rendered

dered it still more respectable and inviolate. It is enacted, that all the effects of a vessel cast away must be taken care of, and restored, after deducting the necessary expences, to the owners of the cargo, if any of them makes a demand for the same within the space of a year and a day. But if no such demand be made, the whole is divided between the king and the salvagers. This law might have appeared sufficient to prevent the unjust alienation of shipwrecked goods. And yet Frederic the fourth has provided against any such attempts still in a more efficacious manner, by his edict of the twenty-first of March one thousand seven hundred and five. It declares, that whoever retains any of the effects belonging to a vessel cast away, shall be hanged, if the value of these goods exceeds the sum of fifty marks, and that all those who live within two miles of the coast where the vessel

vessel

vessel has been wrecked, must be answerable for the losses thus sustained, unless they can discover who the plunderers were.

Navigation gives rise to some obligations which are known only in maritim nations. The inseparable dangers of sea-voyages render insurances necessary. And to such agreements we must doubtless attribute the great encrease of commerce; since the irretrievable misfortunes that trade was otherwise liable to, must have often stopt the enterprizes of the cautious and fearful. The legislature, in this respect, leaves the merchants entire liberty of providing for their own safety, in the manner they think proper, with these few restrictions: that the *police* must be drawn upon stamp paper, and registered; that the nine tenths only of the goods must be insured; and that

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neither party have a previous account of the loss or arrival of the ship on which they are freighted. The insurance is to be paid immediately on signing the police; and if the vessel happens to be lost, the principal sum must be delivered by the insurers within the space of three months after sufficient proofs have appeared to certify the reality of the misfortune. When such testimonies cannot be procured, a ship which was bound for any european port is supposed to have perished, if no accounts are received concerning her, after a year's absence; and after two years, if she was to have sailed out of Europe.

It happens sometimes that navigators are under the necessity of borrowing money in foreign parts, where they are destitute of credit, or of goods to procure them any. They are then allowed to borrow upon their ships, under the condition of pay-

paying back the money on their arrival at the port to which they were bound by agreement with their owners. But if the vessel perishes in the mean time the creditor loses the debt, nor can he recover it afterwards from the merchants or the captain's heirs. This manner of borrowing money at such bottomry may be done with regard to the cargo, as well as to the ship.

I conclude with the agreement that several vessels often enter into, to sail in company, in order to avoid some common enemy. None can afterwards separate from the rest without supporting alone the damages the others may have suffered by their absence. If in those circumstances any prize is made by one of these confederate merchantmen, it is equally divided among them all. One of their own country's ships, when retaken by them, becomes their property, if

the had remained twenty-four hours in the possession of the enemy ; but if the interval should be shorter, the value is shared between the original owner and the present retakers.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LET.

LETTER the Seventh.

To the same.

Contracts, settlements, successions, real and personal rights, in short every different method of acquiring property, is included in the fifth book of the code of Denmark. It will surprize you, Sir, as it does every body else, to find these matters comprized in a few pages, which, in the roman legislature, have been the subject of so many laws, and the pretext of such voluminous comments. One would be apt at first sight to accuse the danish code of being too vague and general in this respect for the exact determination of every particular case that is liable to happen. This reproach however will disappear on a more deliberate examination; and other causes will be found for

the simplicity and fewness of the laws of Denmark, relating to the various means of acquiring and possessing property.

At Rome, the artifices of the patricians to keep the people in their dependance, was the occasion of all these different kinds of contracts, and of all this pomp and solemnity which rendered the knowledge of the law above the capacity of the vulgar. But let me ask from you, Sir, who have considered, in your study of the roman legislature, the principles also of natural right, and the conveniencies of society, whether it be conformable to equity or justice to make a labyrinth of regulations which should be understood with ease in order to be followed with exactness? And does not the government of Denmark deserve some praise for having the good sense to be contented with its own laws, which certainly must be better adapted to
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its particular situation and circumstances, than those foreign codes of justice that reign over the greatest part of Europe?

If it be true, as I believe it is, that the character of a people may be known by the statutes it ordains, those of Denmark must give an advantageous idea of the Danes. They are full of sincerity and plain-dealing, if I may be allowed the phrase. You will meet throughout the whole with none of these formalities which in fact are nothing more than so many precautions against deceit. The simple signing of the covenants in presence of two witnesses, is sufficient to form the most authentic and obligatory deed. They have no notion here of those laws which appear to have been enacted for no other purpose than to enforce the execution of another, and which even thus discover the distrust of the

legislator. The liberty of the parties is entire in every circumstance, where the general interest does not require it to be restrained. The consequence of such regulations is, and this effect deserves particular attention, that there is but one notary-public in the whole city of Copenhagen. It proves at the same time how easily these ordinances are obeyed, and how well they are known to the generality of the people. All deeds must be registered in the offices belonging to the courts of justice ; especially those relating to mortgages, and to the sale of lands, or beneficial privileges : a wise institution which prevents an infinite number of disputes and lawsuits. But the more the legislature has confided in the general good-faith, the more precautions it has taken to prevent particular transgressions. A man convicted of having denied a loan, a deposit, or of having received in hire what he would
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afterwards, said appropriate to himself, is punished by an ignominious penalty which deprives him of all the privileges of a subject. The same punishment is awarded against those who mortgage on their own accounts, the property of other men; or twice mortgage their own effects for their full value; or who sell what they had only borrowed, or had already disposed of to others. They who find lost goods are obliged to make known the same at the parish-church, as well as to declare it to a magistrate, under pain of being found guilty of robbery. And such caution is used to maintain good-faith in every respect, that when a decree is pronounced, or even an action brought, against a man before the supreme court, he can no longer dispose of the smallest part of his estate.

I have already hinted to you that
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the danish legislature has in some cases limited the will of individuals; and the most considerable example I can offer relates to successions,

Nothing seems more just on the first view than the full and free disposal of one's property, nor can any thing seem more natural than the exercise of this power. But on the other hand, you are as well acquainted as I am with the numberless disputes that such a liberty would give occasion to. The only testaments that were first known among the Romans, were made in the assembly of the people, because that law had not been repealed which supposed every body to die intestate. This is also the case in Denmark. The legislature acknowledges no other manner of inheriting than the one it has itself established, and leaves but little room to deviate from the general disposition in matters of this kind. The king

king alone can grant the privilege of bequeathing in a manner different from the directions of the law.

I shall not undertake to examine whether the right of disposing of our estates when we die, belongs naturally to us, or whether rather it be the mere favor of the law. That subtil question is much less important to be known, than this other: which is most advantageous to society, the act which leaves us at liberty to bequeath our fortunes as we think it proper, or the one which deprives us of that power?

If, on the one hand, the liberty of leaving our property to those we chuse be a spur to industry, and, with regard to wise testees, a means too of making the best use of their fortunes which their situation and circumstances will allow; it must be agreed on the other, that, the number

ber of such testators is so small, so much is to be feared from their passions or their caprice, and those who are free from such, are so much exposed to seduction, the precautions that are in fact made use of by the legislature to prevent these artifices, the limits it has fixed to the liberty of testators, the formalities even which it has thought proper to perplex all wills with, so many contests which necessarily arise from them; render, upon the whole, this question a problem that I shall not attempt to resolve. I shall only add, that the king seldom refuses in particular cases the permission of making a will, especially when there are no children who might suffer by it, for if there are, it is extremely difficult to obtain it. After what I have premised, it now remains to mention the rules laid down by law, according to which inheritances are settled. And as they depend, in great measure, upon the laws

laws concerning marriages, it becomes necessary to begin by explaining these.

The legislature places the husband and wife in a community of goods, which blends and confounds all their interests together. A private agreement which would be derogatory to this ordinance, is null and void, except it be confirmed by the king. And from thence it happens that few or no settlements are made in this country, except among people of quality, whose larger fortunes are susceptible of a greater number of varying circumstances. The husband is allowed to settle by way of nuptial present a certain sum by deed upon his wife. But this grant can take place only when the inheritance of the deceased is sufficient to pay his debts. This gift besides cannot exceed the value of two thousand crowns among the nobility, and those who

who enjoy the privileges of nobles. The community of goods between married persons, I have already told you, is the principle according to which successions are regulated; for it is enacted, that the survivor is to have half the inheritance, the other half to be divided among the children, and from this last moiety the remaining parent has a right to the portion of a son. Provided always, that if he or she should marry again, this portion returns to the children. But when a marriage is productive of no offspring, the parties may bequeath each other the enjoyment, during life, of the whole fortune, or even the half of it for ever. They can also agree that the survivor should take back his whole share of their common fortune, and a quarter of that which originally belonged to the deceased; and this is a very equitable disposition in cases where there was a great inequality in the separate

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rate fortunes of the married. When no issue remains, they are also allowed to dispose of half their substance, as they think most proper, and even the whole if for pious uses. The danish laws are so very favorable to pious institutions, that even persons who have children may bequeath half their fortune to charitable purposes. I am sorry, I confess, to find in so wise a government those remains of ancient superstition; and I should be still more grieved at it, were it not that, knowlege, which has been bane of devout follies of every kind, serves as a proper corrective and check upon this law.

Children inherit from their parents in vertue of the law, which prohibits any other distinctions to be made than those it has itself established; and these are they: the sons have double the portion granted to the daughters, and have the preference

ference with regard to the privileged estates that happen to be in the inheritance. The grand children are admitted to a share in right of their parents, and this extends to all the descendants.

They who die without issue are succeeded in their fortune by their father alone. If he be not living, the mother inherits jointly with the brothers and sisters of the deceased, and their posterity. The collateral branches are afterwards admitted to proportionate shares according to the simplest and clearest rules.

This manner of inheriting in right of others, takes always place while there remain, on the one hand, nearer relations to the deceased, and on the other, the children of those who when living were equally near; as for example, the brothers and nephews, or grand-nephews of the deceased.

And the law paying no regard to what side the fortune proceeds from, equally admits the paternal and maternal line to share the inheritance, preferring in every circumstance those who are next a-kin.

This general idea of the order of succession, is, I suppose, as much as you desire; for it is the spirit, not the particulars of the legislation, that you wish to be made acquainted with. It may not be amiss, however, to mention two observations more upon this subject.

The first is this: every possessor of four hundred tuns of hart-korn in landed property, may form a feoffment in trust, and thus dispose of his estate to latest posterity, upon the conditions which he chuses to prescribe. This he cannot however do without paying every debt it owed, and after having regularly

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summoned a year beforehand his creditors to produce their pretensions and demands upon it. This permission of the law is entirely agreeable to the spirit of monarchy, which tends to favor and encourage every thing that may support the body of the nobles, as an essential part of the constitution. Proprietors of land are also allowed to leave a double portion to one of their sons, or if there be no sons, to one of their daughters.

The small number of law-suits, and the readiness with which these few are determined, are distinguishing marks of a well-constituted and wise legislation; and as this country is remarkable for both these advantages *, I

* During the year 1754, there were throughout the whole extent of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway but 143 law-suits tried by appeal before the supreme court. During the year 1755, there were 140, and in the year 1756, 118.

thought it of some importance to find out the causes of this happy peculiarity. It appeared evident enough that the want of property in the peasants was productive at least of this good consequence, that it prevented a multitude of difficulties which have arisen from the immense variety that exists elsewhere in the manner of holding estates. But this cause alone did not seem sufficient to produce the effect observed; and indeed I have found others since, less powerful perhaps, but certainly less subject to inconvenience. Such are the restrictions laid by law on natural liberty, with regard to settlements and wills. Such is the custom of entering every deed of any importance on the records of court. Such also is the pure and simple prescription which after twenty years puts an end to every claim, and becomes the most authentic title. To these may be added the regulations of judicature, which, not con-

tent with incidental presumptions or collateral circumstances, require positive and solid proofs, and which receive the oath of the accused in preference to the strongest conjectures. And what contributes not a little, is the attention of the legislature to prevent as much as possible the *indivision* of different possessors, which is the source of so many disputes and law-suits. Thus if on the same estate one man possesses the right of average consisting in a stated number of days labor to which the peasants are obliged, and another receives the rent, the first may oblige the second to sell him his right; in failure of which the receiver of the rent can force the other to dispose of his right of average to him. Where the same lands are possessed in common by several, the most considerable owner can oblige the rest to hire to him their shares. Another ordinance, which shews the great pre-

precaution of the legislature, enacts, that upon settling an inheritance, every creditor must lay in his claim, in consequence of the notice given him of the death of his debtor, under pain of forfeiting his demands. Such laws are the language of a father, who is resolved that his children shall live in peace and friendship with one another. And an additional proof of this paternal spirit of the legislator, is the edict which was made concerning the regular settling of accounts.

Every wholesale merchant is obliged to have his accounts examined and signed by his customers, at least every second year. And dealers in retail are bound to do the same every year. They must set down in their own and in their customers books the goods they sell them, and from these they must settle once a year under pain of losing the whole. The

same regulation takes place between the landlord and his tenant. The first cannot sue the other, but for what is regularly marked down in their respective books, and agreed to by each other at the end of every year.

You will, I doubt not, draw all the consequences from what I have described to you in this letter, that naturally result from it. To omit nothing, would be an endless work ; and, indeed, you would have great reason to complain, were I unwilling to trust to your own reflexions. I shall therefore mention but one thing more, and that regards the humanity of the laws concerning natural children. If the interest and encouragement of marriage forbid their being treated as favorably as lawful children are, they ought not however to be used with the severity that the guilty alone deserve. The danish
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legislature, which is much milder in this respect than the roman law, or that indeed of most other nations, grants to the illegitimate offspring when formally acknowledged by the father, half the hereditary portion of lawful children ; and when there is no legitimate issue to divide with, they enjoy the whole inheritance. With regard to their mother's fortune, they share equally with the other children.

I remain, good SIR,

Your very humble Servant, &c.

LETTER the Eighth.

To the same.

AS I have described to you, Sir, in a former letter, the method of proceeding in criminal causes, I shall find but little to entertain the curiosity of a foreigner in the sixth book of the danish code, which relates entirely to malefactors. The nature of punishments differs but little from those inflicted in other countries for the like crimes. But these differences, inconsiderable as they are, are on the side of humanity; and on this account you will excuse me if I mention them. The pain of exile, for example, is seldom put in practise; they who would be banished according to the judicature of other nations, are condemned in Denmark to the public works. Thus
 subjects

subjects are preserved to the state, and other kingdoms are freed from the crimes which these men would not, probably, cease to commit there, as well as in their own. Theft is never punishable by death, except when committed after escaping from jail, or from the public works. But what I think most worthy of your attention, is the remaining mark of that spirit which animated the ancient inhabitants of the north, and which made them look with an eye of indulgence on every action that discovered daringness and courage. For thus alone can I account for the distinction that is made between robberies committed by violence or by cunning. This last is subject to corporal correction; the other only to an ignominious penalty.

The custom of the king's signing every sentence of death before it can be executed, is productive of great
lenity

lenity in the punishment of crimes. The condemned have by this means a free access to the sovereign, who seldom shews himself inflexible but when their guilt has been of such a nature, that it absolutely requires a public and exemplary atonement. The mildness and moderation of this people, among whom heinous crimes are much less known than in other countries, give the king an opportunity of listening to the dictates of clemency, the most beautiful attribute of royal authority; for it is plain that severity can be only necessary, where the inclination to transgress encreases, and calls out for stronger ramparts to stem the progress of guilt.

Few robberies are committed in this country, not even at Copenhagen. This we must partly attribute to the difficulty of escaping from a fortified town, situated in a small island;

island; and partly, to the great care that is constantly taken to keep up a regular well-chosen body of watchmen, who are generally people of some character, always ready upon the least noise or tumult to attend, and very active in lending mutual assistance to each other. And indeed, the streets are quite safe all hours of the night, and the high-roads are as little dangerous as the streets.

Pillage and murder are crimes unknown to these people, since the severity of punishment has put a stop to the most singular fanaticism that ever existed. Some men of melancholy minds, and distempered brains, took into their heads to imagin that the surest road to heaven was to die upon a scaffold. Tired of life, dazzled with the affecting behavior of some of their companions in the moment of execution, and considering the preparation for an approaching death,

death, as the most certain method of gratifying the deity, they dared to provoke the avenging strokes of justice, by committing the most shocking assassinations in cold blood, and called aloud for death, as the highest favor that could be granted to them. The long confinement in which they were held, and the repeated punishments inflicted upon them before their lives were taken away, stifled this extraordinary enthusiasm in its origin. Perhaps it would have answered still better to have refused these wretches the death they sought, and condemned them to perpetual imprisonment and labor.

Desertion is seldom capitally punished. A man, who is tried for a crime of this nature, must have been an old offender, or the case attended with some odious circumstance, when his life is not spared. This is so true, that within these five and twenty years
last

last past, scarce two soldiers have been put to death on this account.

But what adds much to the honor of this government is, that the faults against the sovereign, such as frauds or mismanagement committed in the administration of his finances, are punished with much more lenity than those which affect the interest of any of his subjects. Nothing can be more opposite to despotism, where the slightest offence against the prince is most rigorously avenged; but nothing more agreeable than such moderation to the principles of monarchy, or rather indeed to paternal government, which, I have already said, that of Denmark so very much resembles.

This observation brings me back to the point from whence I begun these letters. I undertook to shew that this government is far from being

ing despotic. You may now judge whether I have asserted right.

You have found the kings of Denmark in the enjoyment indeed of unlimited power, in virtue of the most solemn title; but you have also perceived, during the whole legislation, that this authority is solely employed in preventing oppression, and in maintaining a proper balance between the different orders of the state. You cannot perceive the least trace of violence or inquisition in any part of the administration. The conduct of men is free in this country, and their actions controlled by law only. No prosecutions here are known upon any liberty taken in private conversation, and which is rather the effect of imprudence, than a real crime. None of those oblique and hidden methods to take off persons disliked or suspected by the government. No extraordinary commissions for the trial

al of subjects, which always leave room to suspect that they are condemned rather by the passion, than by the justice, of the sovereign. Punishments are moderate. Severity is a thing unknown in this government, either in the political, or in the civil department. The great enjoy their privileges and superiority with as much safety, as the middle state its mediocrity. They are never exposed to those terrible turns of fortune, which men of rank in other nations often undergo, for no other reason but because they happen to displease the prince, tho they should commit no real offence. If they lose their places in the danish court, and that seldom is the case, they generally are appointed to others, in order to soften in some measure the affliction of disgrace. Add to all these, that rapid progress which commerce makes in Denmark, and which is always impatient of control, and flies away from despotism. While

While the spirit, which at present animates this monarchy continues, the Danes may boast of living under a most desirable government. And what reason can they have to fear a change? If ever there could be occasion to dread the yoke, it must have been at a time when absolute authority was yet recent, and surrounded with jealousies and fears. At present that every heart cherishes that power whose encrease has been only distinguished by new favors and additional beneficence towards the people, can the prince make any alteration in the constitution of the state capable of alarming them? Must he not be always conscious, that, being unable to see every thing with his own eyes, tho' he should consider his subjects as a private property, and make every interest subservient to his own, yet there will always be some man, who, under the cloke of his authority, will

will infringe every right, and decide all things according to his desires or his caprice? There is no other remedy for this evil, than the distribution of power, and the wise precaution of balancing those, in whose hands it is entrusted, by each other. This is one of the fundamental principles of the danish government; and a sufficient ground to believe, that were any man actuated with the ambition of introducing dangerous innovations in the state, he would find such obstacles on his road, that the prince himself must at last perceive the danger and fatality of such undertakings. And must not every monarch see that his interest cannot differ from those of his people? Has not the progress of knowlege in the present age consecrated for ever this precious maxim, that a prince can never make his dominions flourish, without rendering his government regular and mild? that the bounds he

sets to his authority are only so many
 precautions against the ambition of
 those to whom he trusts it, that
 every liberty which he grants his
 subjects tends solely to strengthen the
 springs of industry and of genius, or,
 in other words, to encrease his own
 power and grandeur? One of the
 greatest obligations we owe to com-
 merce, is the introduction of these
 maxims of justice and moderation
 without which it is impossible it
 should subsist. Such were the rules
 that the government of Denmark fol-
 lowed, even before the augmentation
 of trade became one of its principal
 objects of desire. But since that
 moment, I dare assert the Danes pos-
 sess in this spirit which animates it at
 present, a new pledge of the felicity
 they enjoy. May it not also be re-
 marked, that if sovereigns sometimes
 push things to extremities, their re-
 solution arises from the opposition
 of parties, which alienate their af-
 fections,

sections, and produce a clashing of separate interests, where that of the state is often forgot or overlooked? A man so much superior to other men, that he can dread nothing from their efforts, must be naturally humane and benevolent. And if political liberty be lost where such power exists, civil liberty, much more important than the first, cannot fail to gain by it. I need not mention the happy effects of religion and of morals in setting proper bounds to absolute authority. You are, I doubt not, fully sensible of their force.

I remain, SIR,

Yours, &c.

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LETTER the Ninth.

To the same.

SIR,

MY former letters related chiefly to the legislation of Denmark. I have endeavored to mark out the principles and spirit of its laws. Truth was the guide I chose to follow, and I left nothing neglected in order to find it out. No method can be more pleasing to a philosopher, whose life has been employed in the like search. And the same shall conduct me in the account I intend to give you now, of what his present majesty has done in favor of the administration of justice. I yield to your repeated entreaties. You profess yourself desirous of being better acquainted with a prince whose name is precious to all who love humanity.

manity.. I shall give you a simple recital of what he has done; his actions will shew a truer picture of his mind, than my pen could draw.

Tho his majesty's predecessors had already made several advances towards giving to the supreme court of justice a solid form and fundamental rules; to him however it stands indebted for the greatest obligations. In the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty he granted a sum from his private treasury, in order to encrease the salary of the judges. He also appointed a president to this tribunal, whose dignity adds a new lustre to the whole. In the edict of the twenty-third of February one thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, he has taken the surest and wisest precautions to render this supreme court of judicature as respectable by the integrity of its members,

and the equity of its decrees, as it had already been by the authority which it exercised.

None can be judges in this court, but those who have presided at inferior tribunals, or who have shewn considerable abilities, on giving their opinions in several causes before the court with that wisdom and prudence which become a minister of justice.

In general, indeed, they, who are admitted members, seldom obtain a right of voting for several years, during which, they must assiduously attend, and deliver in writing their opinion in every cause, so as to give manifest instances of their capacity and knowlege. This regulation must be productive of great advantages, while the president takes care to observe with rigor that part of the royal edict, which ordains, that no man can be admitted in the number of auditors, before

before he has given to the king's council sufficient proof of his knowledge in the law. All these measures tend to keep ignorance from the sanctuary of justice. There are others put in practise in order to maintain integrity. Such as a power of excepting to all judges who have the least direct or indirect concern in the suit that is then depending, or who have previously given their advice, or made known their opinion of the cause. For it is strictly prohibited to the judges, even to discourse among themselves with regard to any matters that are afterwards to be decided by them. But what must create in all their breasts the highest emulation of glory and of vertue, is the direction the clerk of the crown receives from the king, to write down their several opinions according as they are given; that a monument may for ever remain of their probity and wisdom, and may also serve as precedents in

the similar cases which may afterwards arise. If judges, who are to determine in the last resort upon the lives and fortunes of their fellow-subjects, could be supposed to stand in need of any other motive than their duty, I might add, that bribery in them is punishable by death.

His majesty's attention was not limited to the measures necessary to have justice exactly administered throughout his dominions. He has also taken care that it should be rendered without delay. The causes of every year are enrolled on a register, which is printed and fixed up in court, that each may be determined in its turn. This order is very seldom changed, and such alterations must be founded on the strongest motives; nor ever interrupted, but by trials for crimes which in their nature require the quickest dispatch. The court must multiply its sittings when
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the number of law-suits is such, that they cannot be otherwise decided within the year. And in order to bring things to a more speedy issue, they are allowed to change in the most simple causes, the method of trial by pleading, to the much shorter one, of a report by one or more of the judges. In short, Sir, the measures are so many and so sure which are taken in this respect, that the kingdom of Denmark can boast of more than I suppose any other country in Europe; of having all the causes which are brought by appeal to the supreme court, finally terminated within the annual period.

The manner in which the lawyers exercise their profession is of too great importance to the administration of justice, to have been neglected in these regulations. None can be called to the bar, till they have produced testimonies of their studies, and

and given proofs of their abilities in several pleadings. Besides the path they are obliged to take at their reception, the judge may require from them upon every new cause they plead, what the Romans called *juramentum calumnie*; and another thing which obliges them to study with care every suit they are employed in, is the obligation they lie under of making proper extracts from all the papers relative to the cause; which may serve in case of sickness or of death to hinder confusion or delay. No lawyer can bargain with his client for his chance in any law-suit. There is another custom peculiar to this tribunal, which is, that the lawyers are obliged to deliver into the hands of the clerk of the crown all titles and deeds relating to the cause, in order to be read aloud for the more certain information of the court, who have

have no other knowledge of these titles, than what they then receive. This is, Sir, the substance of the ordinance which his majesty commands the judges of his supreme court to have constantly before their eyes, in the execution of their employments; and is publicly read every year at the opening of the court. The king has also lately published an edict, which relates to the sovereign court of Norway, and tends to introduce the same regulations as in the supreme court of all his majesty's dominions. He has encreased the number and the salary of the judges who compose that tribunal, establishing at the same time such assiduity and regularity in all, that no cause depending in that kingdom will for the future remain undetermined at the end of the year.

I place the *military code of the marine* among the many obligations which

which the jurisprudence of this country owes his present majesty. It contains two parts. The first was signed the third of February one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two, and is already printed. It regulates every thing concerning fleets at sea. The second part, which is expected every day to be published, relates to the body of the marine while on shore. The whole determines in the greatest detail the privileges and power of the admiralty, the duties of every officer, and of all persons belonging to the royal navy. This minute detail with regard to the respective duty of officers was the more necessary, as the strict subordination established by the law might otherwise have rendered entirely arbitrary the authority of superiors. The form of proceeding in the trial of crimes committed upon the high seas is also laid down in the same ordinance. The degrees of punishment proportioned to the offence
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are fixed with care. The duties of officers and sailors in a day of action are minutely explained; and in this part the sovereign shews himself as attentive to recompense and encourage valor and merit, as to punish cowardice or disaffection. This is not the only important work in the legislature which has been undertaken by order of his present majesty, and forwarded by his bounty.

A reformation had been already thought of, under the late reign, in the danish code, which was overcharged with rescripts and ordinances, that different times and different circumstances had given occasion to; and this alteration was generally wrought by the changes which time and the encrease of industry and trade will necessarily introduce into every state. It therefore became necessary towards giving the danish jurisprudence that simplicity and clearness which

which it has so much reason to glory in at present, to bring back all these particular laws to those that are contained in the code of Christian the fifth; a work worthy of the men who are most endued with wisdom, and most versed in the knowledge of the law. The late king entrusted this undertaking to a commission of the greatest lawyers in the kingdom. But nothing is more difficult than that a body of men, each of whom has his peculiar views and particular plan, should form a regular system composed of many parts properly connected with each other, and all tending to one common center. It is still less possible to suppose, that the several parts of this laborious task being separately digested by different men, can have that relation and conformity one with another, which are essential to a good legislation. In fact, the commissioners employed by his late majesty
made

made but few advances in the work they had undertaken, when that prince died. His successor has followed another method, and has entrusted this important revision to a learned and celebrated councillor. We cannot expect too much from his profound knowledge of the law, as well as from his great application. And there is every reason to hope, from the choice the king has made of those who are to examine afterwards the whole, that it will contribute considerably towards maintaining order and tranquillity throughout his territories, and will remain to posterity as an everlasting monument of his wisdom and care.

The attention his majesty has paid to the jurisprudence of his kingdom of Denmark, has not made him neglect a moment, that of his other provinces. The laws of Jutland are received in the dutchy of Sleswig.

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Holstein has adopted the laws of Lubec together with the saxon laws, and the roman institutes. The kings of Denmark as dukes of Holstein and Sleswig, have also published at different periods, several ordinances in both dukedoms, which, having been never collected, were but little known; and rendered the jurisprudence extremely uncertain. His late majesty had already resolved to remedy this inconvenience. But it is under the present reign that mister de Cronhielm, whose labor and exactness have done him equal honor, has published all the royal ordinances which concern the dutchies of Sleswig, Holstein, and the annexed provinces, authorised by letters patent from his majesty, declaring them real laws.

The king not content with removing every source of doubt with regard to the administration of justice
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in his two dukedoms, has besides added great lustre to the sovereign tribunals of Sleswig and Gluckstadt, by the creation of new dignities, and by a considerable increase in the salaries of the judges. He has also abolished the custom of consulting the german universities in criminal cases, which are all now subject to the court of judicature that resides at Gluckstadt. In the trial of criminals, the whole consists in the discussion of facts; and these with the circumstances that attend them, are immediately under the eye of the judges. Why should therefore men, who by their profession must be versed in the knowlege of the law, and by their employments are constantly called to make a continual application of this knowlege; I say, why should such men go consult foreign lawyers, who certainly must be less cautious than those who are

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appointed by his majesty in disposing of the lives of his subjects? I might deduce additional arguments in favor of this alteration, from the time that is gained by it, and the expences that it saves; but what I have already said, is sufficient to convince you of its usefulness.

I am, Sir,

Yours, &c.

LET.

LETTER the Tenth.

To the same.

I HAVE given you, Sir, some account of the civil law of this country. But I should neither fulfil my own design, nor satisfy your desires were I to stop here. The political constitution of every people makes too considerable a part of its legislature, to pass over in silence what relates to it in the danish code. These laws are as simple as the form of the government. In a kingdom where the chief possesses the sovereign authority without division and without control, the fundamental law must consist entirely in regulating the order of succession, and the form of a regency in case of a minority. These are the points which are settled by the royal law. I have added a

translation of the whole at the end of this letter. It is of too great importance to be contented with an abstract.

I think it likely that you will be satisfied with the wise precautions this act contains. Every thing relative to the succession is determined in so clear a manner, that it is scarce possible to suppose, any contest may ever arise from it. But since the series of my enquiries into the danish legislation, has led me to the fundamental law of the state, give me leave to fix your attention a few moments on the great event which introduced the present-established form of government into this country.

Every revolution that changes the face of government, must be a curious spectacle to philosophic eyes; but history, I believe, can furnish none so remarkable as the one which
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rendered the kings of Denmark absolute monarchs. A mild and moderate prince finds himself raised on a sudden to unlimited power by the concurrence of all the orders of a kingdom, the authority of whose chief had been always before restrained within very narrow bounds, and without the effusion of a single drop of blood either to bring about or to prevent this change. Each order of the state deliberate separately on this important subject; and what seldom happens on the like occasions and in such debates, all come to the same conclusion without any violent struggle. They all agree to grant absolute hereditary power to the king. Where can an example be found of such proceeding? The capitulation which limited the royal prerogative is given up to his majesty. They free him from his former oath. Every class of people in the state sign separately a deed where the supreme authority

of the king is solemnly acknowledged, and oaths taken to maintain the power they thus created. You are, doubtless, curious to know the causes and the springs of such a sudden, such a surprizing revolution. These are they.

The government of Denmark, like all other gothic institutions, was divided until the year one thousand six hundred and sixty, between a king who was elective, the grandees of the nation or the senate, and the states. The king had very little power besides that of presiding in the senate, and of commanding the army. The lords together with the king governed the state in the intervals that passed between the sittings of the diet, which was composed of the nobility, clergy, and commons. In their general assemblies the great affairs of the nation were determined.

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This constitution is generally supposed to have been a free one. But draw we not this favorable conclusion from the comparison we make of it with the present constitution of Great-Britain? This is, however, far from being the idea we should conceive of it. What efforts have not the commons of England made, before they could arrive at the liberty they now enjoy? To gain that influence in the state which the people have a right to, was not all that power necessary which they owe to the riches they have acquired since industry and commerce have succeeded to the barbarism of military ages? The nobility full and fond of warlike glory, to which they stood indebted for the distinctions they enjoyed, despised the commons, who indeed were a very inconsiderable body, until riches had rendered them respectable and powerful. And history shews us that

the government of Denmark was, in fact, regulated on the principles I have mentioned. The nobility in consequence of the privileges it possessed, or the superiority it affected, carried every thing as they pleased in the assembly of the states. And when the diet was prorogued, their credit still rose higher, as in these intervals they divided with the king the only authority that then subsisted in the nation. There were even four great officers of state, the grand master of the realm, the lord chancellor, the earl marshal, and the lord high admiral, who were so many rivals of the royal power. From hence it is plain, that this government was a kind of aristocracy, incapable of subsisting but when the king was unable to form and maintain a party, or that the other orders of the state dared not to oppose the measures and the power of the nobility.

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Mankind seldom know the bounds they ought to stop at. The kings of Denmark, who preceded Frederic the third, had subscribed to very clogging capitulations. But none were more so than those to which this prince was obliged to consent. Several of the principal noblemen availed themselves of this constraint in which the king was held, and became powerful enough to enter into competition with him; they created many troubles which were not appeased till the fomenters of them were banished from the kingdom. Charles-Gustavus king of Sweden gave, as one of his pretexts for entering into Zeeland, the desire he entertained of bringing succor to the king against the senate. The nation in the agitation of civil broils and intestine jealousies, was incapable of making that defence which was expected from it. Copenhagen was besieged the eleventh of August one thou-

thousand six hundred and fifty-eight, and owed its safety to the constancy of the people, and the courage with which they sustained and repulsed the general assault of the eleventh of February one thousand six hundred and fifty-nine.

The check the Swedes received on this occasion, and the succor soon after sent by Holland to the Danes, obliged the former to raise the siege, and to conclude the treaty of Copenhagen, the twenty-seventh of May one thousand six hundred and sixty.

Peace was hardly made, when it was thought necessary to remedy the evils which the state so long had labored under. The country was desolate; the army was unpaid; the navy was destroyed; the treasury exhausted. To consider these several objects, and to redress these grievances, the states were assembled together

gether the eighth of September one thousand six hundred and sixty.

If ever there was a time in which the nobility should have treated with gentleness the other orders of the kingdom, this most certainly must have been the moment. They were soured with their losses; they were conscious that the divisions between the chief and senate had greatly contributed to weaken the nation. The citizens began to be sensible of their influence and force; those of Copenhagen in particular proud of the brave resistance they had made, were full of the privileges which it had procured them. The most considerable was that which gave them the prerogatives of nobles, and made the capital a kind of fourth order in the state. In such circumstances it would have been prudent in the nobility not to have affected, over every other rank of men, that odious superiority which

which the people at that time were less enclined to suffer than before.

The principal purpose of this diet was to find out ways and means for paying the army, and for supplying the other exigencies of the state. The nobles proposed to lay a tax on all consumptions to which they deigned to subject for once themselves; but indeed with so many favorable restrictions on their own side, that the other orders of the kingdom were not sensible of any obligation to them for their offer. To be liable to this duty in the towns, and free from it on their estates, to regulate the taxes of their tenants, nor be subject to any themselves but for three years, were the conditions the nobility insisted upon. They affected also to repeat that it was an effect of their condescension that they consented to wave their privileges upon this extraordinary occasion. The clergy and commons, who dis-

disliked these declarations extremely, proposed, on the other hand, to let out to the best bidders the domains of the crown, which the nobles had long possessed at very trifling rents. This was attacking them in the most sensible part. They opposed with warmth this measure of the commons. Never was there a more favorable opportunity for the king: the firmness and valor with which he had defended his capital, filled the hearts of all his subjects with sentiments of zeal and of gratitude towards him; the inferior orders of the state were incensed against the nobility; and, as if all things had conspired together in his favor, two men united in their interests, disgusted with the nobles, and each very powerful in his own class, Suane bishop of Zeeland, and Nansen burgemaster of Copenhagen, were at that time, the one at the head of the clergy, and the other at the head of the com-

commons. I find, after making the most exact enquiries, that it was on the fifth of October one thousand six hundred and sixty, that Suane first proposed to some ecclesiastics assembled at his house, the encreasing of the royal prerogative; the next day Nansen had a conference on this subject with some of the deputies of the people; and on the eighth of the same month the bishop, in quality of speaker of the clergy, made a public proposal to them to sign a declaration, the purport of which was to render the crown hereditary in the royal race.

This proposition being agreed to and signed, it was sent to the commons, who gave readily their assent, and subscribed the declaration: it was delivered on that same day to the grand-master of the kingdom, as chief of the nobility, that the concurrence of that house might also be
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tained. It seems the lords alarmed at this proceeding, wanted to treat separately with the king, and prevail upon him to be contented with the succession in the male line, to which he would by no means consent. The clergy and commons went on the tenth to the assembly of the nobles, in order to know their resolution, but perceiving the drift of their answer tended only to create delay, they proceeded directly to the royal palace, and offered to his majesty the act they had signed of rendering the crown hereditary in his family. The king with great marks of acknowledgement for their good intentions, answered, that he could not accept their offer unless the lords would join them in the same request. In the mean time, the nobility seemed resolved to persist in their refusal, and discovered some intent of leaving town, with a view by that means of breaking up the diet. To hinder the

execution of this design, the gates were
 suddenly shut the eleventh of Octo-
 ber, and on the thirteenth the nobles
 at last consented to the resolution of
 the two other orders. The capitulation
 which limited the king's authority
 was given up to him the sixteenth,
 and on the eighteenth every rank of
 people took new oaths of allegiance.
 But it was not before the tenth of
 January one thousand six hundred
 and sixty one, that all three orders
 of the state delivered separate acts to
 his majesty, by which they declared
 the crown hereditary in his family in
 the male and female line, granting
 him at the same time absolute power,
 and a right of settling the succeſ-
 ſion and regency as he thought
 moſt proper. The act delivered by
 the lords was ſubſcribed by every ſe-
 nator of the kingdom, and by the
 heads of all the families which then
 compoſed the body of the nobility.
 That of the clergy was ſigned and
 ſealed

sealed by every one of their deputies at the diet, and by the rectors of parishes. The declaration of the commons was not only subscribed by the deputies of the people, but also by the magistrates and the principal persons of every town. These several deeds which bear, you see, all the marks of the most unanimous consent, are preserved in the public records, where I have read them.

A more minute detail would not be agreeable to my present plan; I thought it sufficient to relate the principal facts, and the great springs that brought about so strange and sudden a revolution.

Upon weighing every circumstance of this event, it appears very clearly, that the inferior orders of the state could no longer suffer the distinctions to which the nobility pretended, and, least of all, its unwillingness to con-

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tribute towards the public charges. They fought in an absolute monarchy that equality of which there were no traces left in the kind of aristocracy, which was then established. As this is the principle of the present constitution, it is necessary to recur to it often, in order to account for many facts that could not otherwise be explained. Indeed we must allow the sovereigns of this country have never swerved from it, and that their moderation has been always greater than their power. The expectations of the clergy and people have not therefore been deceived. But as all excesses must be carefully avoided, they have no right to complain of the privileges that are inseparable from the rank of the nobility. Extreme equality is as incompatible with a monarchy as with a republic: in the first it produces despotism; in the second, anarchy. "The nobility, Mon-

Montesquieu very wisely says, should
 less mark the limits between the power
 of the prince, and the weakness of the
 people; than be the means of uniting
 both. No lover of his country
 therefore will be displeased to see the
 nobility preferred to those employ-
 ments to which their birth entitled
 them; or disgusted at the regard
 which are shewn them by the king
 on all occasions.

You will now read with greater
 satisfaction, the translation of the royal
 law, to which this letter is a kind of
 preface.

But before I conclude, give me
 leave to mention the pleasure I have
 felt in giving you this public mark
 of my ancient friendship and es-
 teem, &c.

leaved from such impending destruc-
 tion; and by the care of his pro-
 vidence we have not only obtained

TRANSLATION

desirable peace; but also our serene
 and the states of the kingdom com-
 posed of the nobility, clergy and

R O Y A L A W

and give up the right of election

W E Frederic the third, king of
 Denmark and of Norway, king
 of the Goths and Vandals, duke of
 Sleswig, Holstein, Stormar, and Dit-
 marsh, earl of Oldenburg and Del-
 menhorst; declare to all men, by
 these presents, that, convinced by the
 example of others, as well as by our
 own experience, of the infinite wisdom
 with which the Almighty governs
 empires and regulates their destinies;
 we acknowledge that to him alone we
 must attribute our delivery from the
 late pressing danger which threatened
 sudden ruin to our person, our fa-
 mily, and our kingdoms. By this
 fatherly goodness we have been pre-
 served

served from such impending destruction; and by the care of his providence we have not only obtained a desirable peace; but also our senate, and the states of the kingdom composed of the nobility, clergy and commons, have resolved to renounce and give up the right of election which they had hitherto enjoyed. In consequence of which they have thought proper to deliver to us the several copies of the capitulation we had signed, annulling all its clauses and conditions, discharging us at the same time from our coronation-oath, and entirely freeing us from the obligations it imposed upon us. And the same states, of their own accord and free-will, without any force or solicitation on our side, have granted, to us and to our descendants of both sexes, lawfully begotten, the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, with all the privileges and prerogatives of sovereign autho-

rity: and in consequence thereof have cancelled and annulled the obligatory letters which we published in the name of our well-beloved son prince Christian, bearing date the eighteenth of June 1650; as also the provisional disposition of the year 1651; and in general all acts, documents and constitutions contrary to the hereditary right and absolute power that is now conferred upon us: enabling us at the same time to regulate according to our will and pleasure, not only the form of the government for the future, but also the manner of succession in the male and female line; and to prescribe the rules that are to be followed in case of a minority. They have also desired us to publish an ordinance in relation to these several articles, which ordinance they have promised for themselves and for their posterity to consider as a fundamental and an immutable law to be observed religiously

ously and inviolably by them, and their descendants forever. And they have besides solemnly bound themselves by oath to defend and support this royal law with their lives and fortunes, against such person or persons, whether natives or foreigners, who shall ever undertake or attempt to speak or act in opposition to it; so that no motives of hatred, friendship or fear, of danger, utility or damage, of envy or any other human artifice shall ever influence or prevail upon them or their posterity to be wanting in their duty towards us on this occasion. We might also add in this place many other proofs which our loving and faithful subjects have given us of their affection and attachment; and which are manifest marks of their zeal for the prosperity of our royal house, as well as for the security and tranquillity of our dominions.

Considering therefore with all possible attention and gratitude the singular favour that providence has granted unto us, and the very great love of our faithful subjects, as well as the entire confidence they have reposed unanimously in us, We have, in order to make the most suitable return for such benefits, employed all our care and abilities in settling a form of government, and a rule of succession which may best agree with the principles of monarchy; and we have thought proper to declare the same in a royal law, which we hereby constitute and appoint to be observed by our successors, and by the inhabitants of our kingdoms and provinces, as the fundamental and unalterable law of these our dominions to the end of time.

ARTICLE
The hereditary king of Denmark
and Norway shall be in effect, and

ARTICLE the First.

As God in the cause and principle of all things, the first disposition of this our royal law is, that all our descendants, who shall sit on the thrones of Denmark and of Norway thro right of succession, shall adore the true and only God; and in the manner and form revealed unto us by his holy word; and explained in our confession of faith agreeable to that of Augsbουργ of the year 1530: desiring also that they take care to maintain the same in all its native purity throughout their dominions; and that they protect and support it against all heretics, sectarists, and blasphemers.

ARTICLE the Second.

The hereditary king of Denmark and Norway shall be in effect, and
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is to be considered by all his subjects as their only supreme chief in this world. Nor is he to acknowledge either in civil or ecclesiastical affairs any other superior or judge than God alone.

ARTICLE the Third.

The king shall enjoy the supreme right of making, altering or repealing laws, excepting only the royal law, which must always be regarded as fundamental and irrevocable; and he shall also have the power of granting exemptions or dispensations.

ARTICLE the Fourth.

The king shall name, at his own will and pleasure, to all dignities and employments of what nature or denomination soever, which he may also take away or restore.

ARTICLE the Fifth.

The forces and fortresses of the kingdom are to be at the disposal of the king. He shall have full power of making peace and war, forming alliances, and levying taxes on his subjects: as no state can be defended without an army, which cannot be maintained but at the expence of the people.

ARTICLE the Sixth.

The king shall have the supreme jurisdiction over all the ecclesiastics in his dominions. In him alone shall be invested the power of determining and regulating the rites and ceremonies of divine service; as well as of convoking councils and synods in matters of religion; in a word, he shall enjoy in his person all the rights of sovereignty to be

be exercised by him in virtue of his own authority.

ARTICLE the Seventh.

All affairs of government, all public acts and patents are to be issued in the king's name, sealed with the royal seal, and signed with his hand, except in case of a minority.

ARTICLE the Eighth.

The king shall be of age as soon as he enters into his fourteenth year. From that time he shall publicly declare his intention of governing without the control of any regent or tutor whatsoever.

ARTICLE the Ninth.

The government of the kingdom during a minority is to be regulated according to the last will of the mi-

nor's predecessor. But if no such disposition or will be made, the queen-mother, if surviving, shall be regent of the kingdom, with the assistance of the seven chief officers and counsellors of the crown. These shall manage the government between them by majority of voices, the queen having two votes, and the great officers one each. All dispatches, acts, and proclamations are to be issued in the king's name; and signed by the queen, and the seven assisting counsellors.

ARTICLE the Tenth.

If the queen-mother be dead or married again, the next prince of the blood who lives in the kingdom, and can always remain there, shall be declared regent, provided he shall have attained to his eighteenth year. He shall have two votes in determining all matters of the state;

and

and in every other respect, the regulations of the preceding article shall take place.

ARTICLE the Eleventh.

But if the first prince of the blood be under age, and there be no other prince of the blood who shall have attained to his eighteenth year; the seven above-mentioned great officers of the crown shall exercise the regency, with equal authority; and by a plurality of votes, in the manner and form already prescribed.

ARTICLE the Twelfth.

If a seat should become vacant in the council of regency by the death of any of the seven administrators; or by any other accident: the remaining members shall immediately elect a person worthy of that high dignity and important employment; and

and he shall enjoy in the regency and council the office and seat of his predecessor.

ARTICLE the Thirteenth.

The regent and tutors shall not only swear fidelity to the king; but, more particularly as administrators of his dominions, they shall solemnly and sincerely promise to maintain with their utmost diligence, the unlimited monarchic power of the king during his minority, as well as the hereditary right of his family. They must also promise to govern and direct all things, as men who are accountable for the consequences to God and to their king.

ARTICLE the Fourteenth.

As soon as the regent and tutors shall have taken the necessary oaths, and be put in possession of their several

veral employments, they shall draw up an exact and particular state of every thing belonging to these kingdoms, and the provinces dependant upon them; with an account of the towns and fortresses, the lands and jewels, the treasure, army and navy, and the revenue and expences of the king; that the real situation of the kingdoms at that time may clearly appear. The regency must give a candid and full account of their administration concerning these several articles, and shall be answerable to the king, for every loss or damage occasioned by their fault, when he shall come of age.

ARTICLE the Fifteenth.

The throne of these kingdoms shall never be deemed vacant, as long as any of our descendants in the male or female line lawfully begotten shall remain to possess it. As soon
therefore

therefore as the king shall die, his next heir shall be king in name and in reality. He shall immediately mount the throne, and assume the title of majesty; as the royal dignity and monarchic power belong to him by hereditary right, the moment his predecessor ceases to exist.

ARTICLE the Sixteenth.

The states of the kingdom composed of the nobility, clergy and commons, in conferring upon us and our descendents the sovereign and unlimited authority, have thereby established, that upon the demise of one king, the crown, scepter, power and titles of hereditary monarchy immediately devolve upon the next heir without any formal delivery of the same; and for the future, the kings of Denmark and Norway, as long as any of our royal house remain, are born such without any ne-

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cessity of election. Notwithstanding these several circumstances, in order to manifest to the world that the kings of Denmark and Norway place their principal glory in acknowledging their dependence on the supreme Being, and think themselves truly honored in receiving his benediction by the ministers of his gospel, and that he may be favorable to their reign; We desire that the sovereigns of these dominions be publicly anointed in some principal church, according to the rites and ceremonies which religion and decency require.

ARTICLE the Seventeenth.

The king however shall not be obliged to make any oath, or enter into any promise or covenant with his people, of any kind whatsoever; as, in quality of a free and unlimited monarch, his subjects can under no pretence impose upon him the necessity

sity of an oath, or prescribe conditions to him, confining his authority.

ARTICLE the Eighteenth.

The king may fix the day of his coronation during his minority; and he ought to appoint this ceremony the earlier after his accession to the throne, in order to derive, by this religious act, upon his person and his subjects, the blessing and favor of God, and the powerful assistance which the Almighty grants to his anointed. The ceremony to be regulated as the circumstances of the times shall induce the king to order it.

ARTICLE the Nineteenth.

And whereas reason and experience join to inform us that forces are more effectual united than unconnected, and that, the more considerable the empire of any prince, the bet-

ter he can defend his people from foreign enemies and invaders; we order that our hereditary kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, with the provinces and countries thereunto appertaining, the islands, fortresses, lordships, treasures, jewels, as well as all other goods and warlike stores for sea and land which we at present possess, or shall hereafter belong to us or our successors by right of conquest or succession, or in vertue of any other lawful title, shall, for the future, remain united, without any exception, under one hereditary monarch of Denmark and Norway: The princes of the blood happy in the prospect they enjoy, shall wait with submission and content, the regular course of succession to which they may be called, according to the order we shall establish.

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ARTICLE the Twentieth.

And as we have resolved by the preceding proposition, which we desire to be considered as an essential article of this law, unalterable thro any pretext, and indisputable by any title, that the kingdoms, provinces and possessions we now enjoy, or shall hereafter acquire or be acquired by our successors, shall inviolably remain for ever united in their hands: We order our descendents who shall sit upon the throne, to provide the rest of the royal family with a proper maintenance, according to their high dignity and rank ; the same to be delivered to them in mony, or allowed to them in estates, of which last they must enjoy no more than the annual profits and privileges during their natural lives, the property always remaining in, and reverfible to, the crown. The same is to be

observed with regard to the revenue of the queen-mother.

ARTICLE the Twenty-first.

No prince of the blood shall presume to marry, or go out of the kingdom, or enter into the service of a foreign power, without having previously obtained permission from the king.

ARTICLE the Twenty-second.

The princesses of the blood shall be allowed a provision suitable to their quality, till they are married by royal consent and approbation; when such a portion will be given, as the king shall think proper to bestow. They shall not afterwards be entitled to form any other pretension, or to make any other demand for themselves or for their posterity, unless they

they should be called to the throne by the regular course of succession.

ARTICLE the Twenty-third.

If, upon the king's demise, the next heir shall happen to be out of the kingdom, he shall immediately repair to Denmark, all other motives notwithstanding, there fixing his residence, and taking the reins of government into his own hands. But in case he chuse not to return in the space of three months from the first notice given to him, tho not retarded by sickness or other sufficient and lawful impediment; then the prince of the blood immediately following him in the regular course of succession shall ascend the throne. As to the regency and administration of affairs till the king's arrival, the same regulations are to be observed, which we have prescribed in case of a minority.

ARTICLE the Twenty-fourth.

The princes and princesses of the blood shall have the first rank in the state immediately after the king and queen ; and, in point of precedence among themselves, they shall follow the same order in which they are placed with regard to their right of succeeding to the crown.

ARTICLE the Twenty-fifth.

The princes and princesses of the blood shall be liable to no other jurisdiction than that of the king, who is their only judge in the first and last resort ; unless he shall think it proper immediately to delegate his authority to commissioners for that purpose, in each particular case.

ARTICLE the Twenty-sixth.

What we have hitherto declared in relation to the right of sovereignty conferred upon us and our posterity, and what may be further meant, tho it has not been expressly mentioned, shall be briefly comprehended in the present article : The kings of Denmark and Norway shall for ever remain hereditary and unlimited monarchs, without any previous ceremony of election, or proffer of condition, in the strongest and most favorable sense that any other christian prince may be understood to enjoy the same. This likewise shall extend to the hereditary queens of Denmark and Norway, if the succession should happen to fall into the female line. And as experience and the example of other countries often shew the pernicious consequences of too great trust reposed in ministers
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by their sovereigns, in consequence of which their power too often is undermined, to the prejudice in fact both of prince and people : We recommend and order our successors the hereditary kings of Denmark and Norway, to preserve with the greatest care and attention, to the most remote posterity, their hereditary right and sovereign authority, without the least alteration or diminution from what we have hereby established in this our royal law. In order to render this our desire the more firmly and undoubtedly complied with in every particular, we hereby command that if any attempts are made in future times to become possessed of patents or powers derogating, in the least circumstance, to the uncontrolled and unlimited authority of the monarch, such grant or acquisition shall be null and of no effect ; and the person obtaining by art or intrigue such derogatory privileges,

leges, or who shall endeavor to obtain them, shall be declared guilty of high-treason, and be punished accordingly.

ARTICLE the Twenty-seventh.

Having already determined and resolved that the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, as well as the possessions thereunto actually belonging, or that shall hereafter belong to them, shall remain for ever united and undivided under one sovereign chief of these realms: the rest of the royal family to content themselves with their several privileges, together with the prospect of succeeding in their turn to the throne; we hereby regulate in this article the order according to which the several descendants of our royal house shall inviolably and undisputably ascend the throne of these kingdoms: the male issue lawfully begotten shall always

ways have the first rank in the order of succession; and while a male descending from a prince of our royal line shall remain existent, no princess claiming in right of a father, nor a prince or princess in right of a mother, can form the least pretensions to the crown; so that even a female issued from a prince, shall precede a male descending from a princess of the same royal line of Denmark.

ARTICLE the Twenty.eighth.

In the genealogical order of the heirs to the crown, the succession of the several branches of our royal house shall always exactly be observed: while there is a son of the first male line, the others shall be excluded, and so on with regard to each succeeding branch; and if the throne should pass to the daughters of our house, those descending from the male line shall first be preferred;
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and in a word, the males and male lines shall be admitted first, and in those of the same sex and branch the eldest shall always be preferred to the youngest, according to the order of primogeniture.

ARTICLE the Twenty-ninth.

And that the regular course of succession may meet with no difficulty or interruption from any doubt arising in the interpretation of the words of this our royal law, we have determined to give the following examples, in the persons of the children we are at present blessed with, of the manner according to which we intend that this law shall in all future cases be understood: as soon as providence shall please to remove us from this earthly to a heavenly kingdom, our eldest son prince Christian shall ascend our throne, and enjoy our sovereign power and possessions; and,

and, while any of his issue can be found, tho himself should not even happen to survive us, neither our second son prince George, nor any of his posterity, nor our daughter Ann Sophia or any of her descendents, shall have the least right, or can form the least pretension, to the crown of these realms.

ARTICLE the Thirtieth.

If the line descending from prince Christian should become extinct, tho in the remotest period, the descendents of our second son prince George, according to the order of succession already prescribed, shall immediately mount the throne and govern, with the same power we now possess, the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, and the provinces thereunto at present belonging, or which shall hereafter be acquired by our successors, without any division

sion or separation, under any pretence whatsoever, of the same. And if the posterity of our two sons prince Christian and prince George should become extinct, the foregoing regulations are to be observed, if providence should bless our marriage with any other sons.

ARTICLE the Thirty-first.

But if it should happen, which God avert ! that all the male issue of our sons should be at an end, the crown shall devolve to the daughters according to their birth-right, of the last king's sons, and their posterity ; in failure of whom it shall belong to the last king's own daughters and their posterity, in the regular order of primogeniture : the first branch always to be admitted first ; and with regard to persons of the same line, the males always to be preferred to females, and the elder to the younger.

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ARTICLE the Thirty-second.

If the last king should have no daughters, the princess next in blood of the male line shall succeed to the throne.

ARTICLE the Thirty-third.

In failure of issue in such princess, the next relation to the last king, of a female branch, descending from a male line of our royal house, shall ascend the throne by hereditary right.

ARTICLE the Thirty-fourth.

If the posterities of our sons shall be entirely extinct, then our eldest daughter princess Anne-Sophia and her descendents shall possess the crown of these realms. In failure of whose issue, our other daughters according

according to their order of primogeniture, and their posterities shall succeed to the throne.

ARTICLE the Thirty-fifth.

The daughter of the eldest daughter, even in the most remote degree, shall always be preferred to the children of a younger daughter. Nor shall it be lawful to pass from one branch to another of our royal family, before the first is entirely extinct. The second line must therefore wait the extinction of the first line, the third that of the second, the fourth that of the third, in the same simple and uniform manner.

ARTICLE the Thirty-sixth.

If the succession should devolve to the son of a princess of our royal house, and that he be blessed with male heirs; the same order is to be

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observed

observed among his descendents; as has already been prescribed to the immediate posterity of the male lines of our royal house. The son of a prince shall always be preferred to the daughter of a prince; and the daughter of a prince shall have a prior claim to the son or daughter of a princess.

ARTICLE the Thirty-seventh.

When the crown of these kingdoms shall devolve to a princess of our royal house, her husband shall have no share, jurisdiction or authority in the government of her territories. The crown shall pass after her demise not to her husband, tho he should survive her; but immediately to her children or descendents. And notwithstanding any power or rank he may enjoy or pretend to, in his own dominions; he must always obey and respect the queen, within
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the territories of Denmark and Norway, as sole, hereditary chief and sovereign queen of these realms.

ARTICLE the Thirty-eighth.

Posthumous children shall have a right of succeeding, in their turn, to the crown.

ARTICLE the Thirty-ninth.

In order to avoid any contest or confusion on account of the multitude of descendents, and the number of collateral branches; we particularly order and recommend, that, on the birth of a prince or princess of our royal blood, the parents or nearest relation take care to deliver, without delay, an exact account of the same to the king then reigning, in order to preserve indisputably to them their birth-right in the regular course of succession, by being registered

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gistered in the royal records : and a certificate to be granted by the king of such a notification having been made unto him. A genealogical table of our royal family in all its branches shall be constantly preserved in the public archives.

ARTICLE the Fortieth.

The several articles of this our royal law shall be understood only of children lawfully begotten ; and extends no farther than to the several decedents and branches immediately issuing from our royal person.

We thus have, as far as human prudence was capable of carrying us, endeavored to regulate and dispose all matters according to the justest principles, as well as in the most likely manner of avoiding every inconvenience ; and of securing the peace and tranquillity of our subjects,

jects, by removing all opportunity or occasion of civil wars and domestic dissensions.

However, as the wisest designs of men are under the direction of a higher power; and as, notwithstanding the most prudent precautions, the concurrence of the supreme Being is still necessary to bring all things to a happy issue: We recommend thro all ages to his divine providence and paternal protection, our royal hereditary house, our kingdoms, and our subjects.

Given under our great seal at our royal castle in Copenhagen, this 14th day of November 1665.

FREDERIC.

(Place of the Seal.)

By his Majesty's Order,

SCHUMAKER.

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LETTER the Eleventh.

*To monsieur Truchin, member of the
council of state, in the republic of
Geneva.*

NO part of political economy is foreign to him, who, like you, Sir, has studied the several springs and wheels of government. This the most important of sciences to every member of the commonwealth, appears under a new form, and in a clearer light, since the happy genius of the celebrated Montesquieu has traced the truest road of carrying it to perfection. Men seem to observe, in greater numbers, and with greater care, the causes and consequences of events; and from thence alone must arise the hopes we may conceive of advancing political know-

knowledge to that point, from which it may influence and encrease the happiness of mankind. I dare not take upon me to assert that the facts I intend to lay before you, can any way contribute towards forwarding the progress of that interesting theory which must determin, what taxes are least burdenson to the people, as well as their just proportion with the resources of the subjects, and the simplest manner of levying them. This I submit to your judgment. I should think myself happy, if these lines can fill up a few moments of that philosophic leisure which you chuse to spend with your learned friends; a leisure which I should compare to that of Atticus, if you had not joined to the agreeable qualities of that illustrious Roman, a more refined and more elevated philosophy. This would be the place to mention how very much I am indebted to your

knowledge and to your friendship. If these letters meet with any approbation in the world, a great part of their success will be owing to you; and yet this is not the greatest of my obligations. But lest I should appear to follow rather the dictates of self-love than those of gratitude, I shall spare you the recital, and enter upon the subject of my letter.

There is nothing particular in the nature of the taxes that are raised in this country. Simplicity is, indeed, their characteristic. And does not even this circumstance shew, in some measure, the good administration of Denmark? For I own I cannot see the use of subjecting the people to an infinite number of different impositions, under the mask of separate names, and of various forms. The simplest method that can be pursued, must undoubtedly contribute

but most to prevent grievances and
deceit; and certainly must diminish
the expences in collecting the sums
that are assessed.

To Frederic the fourth the king-
dom is indebted for the order that
reigns at present in the administra-
tion of the finances: an order so
wisely instituted, that the king of
Denmark is perhaps served with
more economy in this respect than
any other prince in Europe, and has
his revenues collected with the least
expence. The board of treasury,
which is entrusted with the manage-
ment of the revenues of the king,
and the various perquisites of the
crown, is composed of three lord de-
puties who perform the office of lord
high treasurer, and of seven assis-
tants. These different members en-
joy equal authority with regard to
the collection of the several taxes. But
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the three lord deputies possess alone the right of disposing of the money, and of laying their accounts before his majesty; they are however obliged to report the opinions of the whole board. I shall let you know, Sir, how things are carried on among them, after having given you some account of the revenues of the crown.

These consist, in Denmark and the islands thereunto belonging, partly in crown-lands and partly in taxes. The king's domains, which are very considerable, are managed by private farmers; and consist in those estates which were granted to the crown for the maintenance of the cavalry, or were lands which always belonged, or have been annexed, to it, at different times, and from various circumstances. They are all entrusted to the care of several intendants, called

led *Amts-Forvalters* and *Regiments-Skrivers**, who receive from the tenants rents of two different kinds: the *Land-gilde* which the farmer pays the king as to his landlord; and the quit-rent which he owes him as his sovereign. These Intendants bring in their accounts every year to the board of treasury.

The duties in Denmark are established on a separate footing in the country, and in towns. In the country all the farmers, except such as are particularly privileged, pay different kinds of taxes proportioned to the number of tuns of *hart-korn* which they possess. By a tun of *hart-korn* is meant a measure of one

* The *Amts-Forvalters* are employed in collecting the duties belonging to the king on the estates of the nobility; and the *regiments-skrivers* are entrusted with the care of the crown-lands.

hundred and twelve thousand square feet at least of arable land; or according to the vulgar estimation, that space of ground in which may be sown a tun of rye, a tun of barley, and a tun of oats. We must not however imagin that this measure is every where the same. It varies as much as the quality of the soil. And this may be easily accounted for, when it is considered that any tun of hart-korn pays the same duty to the king. It became therefore necessary, in order to preserve an equality in the taxes, to make up in extent, for the barrenness of the ground. The tun of hart-korn deserves properly to be called an imaginary measure, contrived to value all the lands in the kingdom; to

* This is so true, that in some of the worst lands, this measure comprehends seven hundred thousand square feet and upwards.

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mark out portions, if not of equal size, at least of an equal produce. The delicacy of such a survey shows how necessary it must have been to take great precaution in the making of it. Christian the fifth, fully sensible of this necessity, gave the strictest orders that these divisions should be made with the utmost care, and the most scrupulous exactness. It were to be wished that the execution had always answered the wise intentions of that prince. But even if we should allow, what some persons are inclined to believe, that this survey might have been much more exact, it will still remain, that all opportunities of levying arbitrary or excessive taxes are thus taken away; and that every subject pays at present, in a settled and regular manner, the same quit-rent which was originally imposed on the land that he possesses.

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The taxes raised on each tun of hart-korn are of four several kinds.

1. The duty on corn, (korn-skatten) which is paid partly in money, and partly in rye, barley or oats, and which in general amounts for every tun of hart-korn to * four marks twelve schelings †.

2. The quit-tent (matrikel-skat-
ten)

A danish mark is worth, according to the course of exchange, from seven-pence half-penny to eight-pence english. Six danish marks, or three mark lubs make a crown or rixdollar, which is worth, according to the course of exchange, from three shillings and eight-pence to four shillings sterling. A mark contains sixteen danish schelings. When I make use of the words marks and schelings, I always mean those of Denmark.

† This tax went formerly much higher, as far as six, seven, eight marks; but for these last five and twenty years and upwards, it has not exceeded the sum of four marks, twelve schelings.

ten) comes, for every tun of hart-korn, to nine marks a year; payable at four terms, in January, April, July, and October.

3. The cavalry-tax (rytter-skatten) which is one mark twelve schelings for every tun of hart-korn.

4. The beef and bacon tax, (oke-og fleske-skatten) which is valued at twelve schelings a year.

These several taxes united amount to sixteen marks the tun. The only variation, and that a small one, which can happen in these duties, is in the corn-tax. But when such changes become necessary, they are always made in a general manner, and an exact proportion is ever strictly preserved.

This method of taxing lands is extremely happy, as it is always proportionable,

portionable, never subject to the caprice or the malice of a collector; and, being constantly equal, stimulates to industry and labor. If it be allowed that the rating of lands is a delicate operation in itself, great obligations must be confessed for having adopted a method susceptible of all the corrections which circumstances may render requisite to be made from time to time.

But there are still other duties to which the farmer is liable. The tithes, he pays, are divided between the king, the church, and the minister of the parish. That part which belongs to the crown is generally granted to universities, to hospitals, and to public schools, besides what the neighboring landlords have formerly purchased from the crown. And that you may be at once informed of all the obligations of the danish peasants, I shall add, that they

they are bound to keep the roads and bridges in repair, to furnish, when express orders are given, and then only, to furnish, I say, horses for the king, his ministers and officers, on any journey or excursion which he makes thro their part of the country; and, lastly, they must contribute towards the expences of the prisons, the maintenance of public schools, and to pay their share of the parish charges.

The peasants of Denmark in being subjected to several duties, resemble almost all the other peasants of Europe. But they enjoy this peculiar advantage, that they always know what they have to pay, and are never exposed to any kind of oppression or extortion.

Besides; the weight of all these taxes principally falls on the land-
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lord, who on his side has no reason to complain, as for the most part either he or his ancestors bought the estate on the footing of that settled revenue, which is never lessened by any sudden stroke of power, or arbitrary imposition of government: measures, indeed, that would necessarily tend to prejudice and diminish the value of landed estates. However, if it be granted that the easy circumstances of the peasants must be favorable to population, and must give them an opportunity of improving the lands they cultivate; we must own that it were to be wished the calls of the government could allow his majesty entirely to follow, in this respect, the humane dispositions of his mind.

Hitherto I have dwelt on the taxes paid by farmers. But those who live in the country without applying to husbandry, or whose privileges exempt

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them from quit-rent, are subject to a poll-tax, which is called *folke-og familie-skatten*.

The lieutenant governors, their secretaries, the intendants, the keepers of the royal palaces, and all other officers belonging to his majesty, as well as noblemen who inhabit privileged estates, pay two danish crowns each person; the same sum for their wives, and every one of their children above twelve years old. If they have horses they must pay a crown for every separate piece of ground on which these horses feed, and are maintained.

The pastors of parishes pay for their wives and for every child that has attained to twelve years of age, the sum of one crown two marks; and a crown duty for their horses. Their person is exempt from this tax in consideration of the trouble which

they take in drawing up the list of those who are subject to it.

The curates, chanters, sextons, millers, and peasants who farm lands that are quit-rent free, pay for themselves, their wives, and every child, four marks; and a crown for their horses, let the number be what it will.

Noblemen's stewards and secretaries pay a crown a-piece yearly.

Their footmen three marks, and their servant maids two.

The peasants who do not hold any land themselves, nor are servants to others, but work as daily laborers, are subject to a tax of a crown a year; and their wives, in the same situation, to half a crown.

They who are employed in the arts necessary to agriculture, and live in

in the country, are exempted from this tax; but all other tradesmen pay two crowns a year for themselves, the same for their wives, and for every other individual of their family.

Such, and such only, are the duties levied in the country. The poll-tax is farmed out; but the quit-rent is collected by his majesty's officers called *amts-fortvalters*, who lay their accounts before the board of treasury. The commissioners of this board who are employed in managing the crown-lands, and in protecting the peasants that live on noblemen's estates, enter into many details which nothing but the good order, now so long established, could render any way practicable.

The account of the *amts-fortvalters*, and of the regiment-skivers, are

are first examined by the *rent-skrivers* *, who are properly, indeed, controllers, and make every observation relative to those accounts that justice and his majesty's interest require. Their remarks are afterwards referred to the *amts-fortvalters*, who join the necessary explanations. The whole is delivered to one of the commissioners of the treasury, whose report is generally agreed to by the board, and serves as a precedent, unless the nature of the case render it necessary to be laid before the king. The sums remaining in the hands of the *amts-fortvalters*, when his accounts are settled, are immediately carried to the exchequer under the care of the cashier, who is entrusted with the produce of all the revenues of Den-

* There are seven officers of *rent-skrivers* for Denmark, five for Norway, and five for the German provinces.

mark. But the collectors of his majesty's customs are not duly and lawfully discharged without an acquittance from his own hand, which is granted upon a report from the treasury. The king does not always receive his revenues in money. If he wants forage or corn, he is paid in these commodities; which is a saving both to him, and to his subjects.

These different methods were calculated, and do really tend, to prevent any unjust distribution in the taxes, and to convey into the coffers of the crown their entire produce without any embezzlement, and with as little expence as possible: precautions certainly of the utmost importance, in this branch of public administration.

Mankind, too long busied in speculative and fruitless enquiries, seem

at present to turn their chief attention towards the structure of the political machine. In my opinion, physic has not greater obligations to the immortal HERVEY for the discovery of the circulation of the blood, than are due by all governments to those valuable and public spirited men who have established the true principles of the circulation of political blood, if I may be allowed to employ so bold an expression. The great vessels, methinks, have been found out, on which this fine mechanism in great measure depends. And their proper uses are so well ascertained, that the politician has now no room to go astray. But there yet remain several discoveries to be made, several obstructions to be removed, and new channels to be laid open. Methods must still be sought to render the present circulation more rapid and more equal. It were worthy of
sove-

sovereigns to encourage the labors of those who apply themselves to this important object, especially when they lay down facts as the foundation of their arguments; for it is at length made evident, that in politics, as well as in natural philosophy, hypotheses are dangerous, and experiment the only faithful guide.

A man like you, Sir, who takes pleasure in every thing that concerns the happiness of society, will readily pardon the digression that the same love of mankind prompted me to make. I return to my subject. And this shall now regard the office of lieutenant governors. Their influence on the prosperity of society is extremely great, and their attention in the discharge of this employment should be proportioned to its importance. Established for the protection of the people, they should ever have

have this point in view: they are intended to hold the scale, and to keep it poised between the interests of the crown and those of the subject, between the amts-fortvalter and the peasant. The amts-fortvalter can never proceed to military execution against the farmer who has not paid his taxes, without the governor's consent; and this consent must be never granted but when the peasant really deserves such rigor. In order to be a competent judge in these affairs, every governor is obliged to make the circuit of his jurisdiction several times a year, with a view of becoming acquainted in the most minute detail, with the real situation of every peasant, his conduct, his circumstances and resources. This attention of the governors relates only to the farmers living on the king's domains; those who are subject to other landlords must be taken care of
by

by them; and, landlords, it must be remarked, are rendered accountable for their tenants: an institution which we shall acknowledge to be extremely prudent and wise, when we reflect that it obliges them to a prudent management of their estates; assures the revenues of the crown from any diminution; and preserves the poor from the extortion of collectors, a set of men who, in general, are ignorant of the several modifications and abatements which bad crops and other unfortunate events often render necessary.

I shall now proceed, Sir, to the impositions that concern towns; and in the first place, I reckon the duties to be paid on all goods which are imported or exported. These are farmed out in all parts of the kingdom except at Copenhagen. Several companies composed of the prin-

principal merchants and other interested men are at present the contractors. The bargain is renewed every three years.

It would be troublesome and needless to fill up this letter with the book of rates, or duties payable for every different kind of merchandise. It will be sufficient, I dare say, to mention what would be the result of such a book; which is, that one with another all merchandise imported into this kingdom pay a duty of ten per cent. An exact knowledge of the imports and exports, shewing on what side the balance of commerce lies, furnishes the true principles upon which the custom-house duties should be regulated. And no nation can be said to have made a proper progress in trade, in whose hands these duties have not been a means of extending its commerce,

merch, as well as of encreasing its revenues. That measure was therefore wisely by which all raw materials imported for the use of manufactories or artists are declared duty free. It were perhaps to be wished that the same favor was granted to merchants who are obliged at present to leave their goods at the custom-house, until they are bought by the manufacturer; which is a method liable to many inconveniencies. It was extremely well judged to impose on all merchandize imported on foreign bottoms, a higher duty than if they had been shipped aboard danish vessels. And in consequence of the same principles it has been enacted, that all imported goods should receive, when re-exported, a drawback equal to the duty they had paid on landing.

Another considerable branch of his majesty's revenues in towns, is the excise,

excise which is paid on all liquors and dry goods. This duty is farmed out. I must also make mention here of that excise which is paid at the mill for every bag of corn that is ground, tho' this duty is collected by the king's officers.

You would probably find it tedious and irksome to read over a minute account of the duty levied on every branch of consumption. I shall therefore content myself with mentioning a few articles, by which you may judge of the nature and extent of the excise that is paid in Denmark.

Rix. Mar. Shel.
For every aam or hoghead,
containing 155 quarts of
Spanish, Rhenish, or Ita-
lian Wines, the excise and
custom-house duties a-
mount to . . . 15 0 0

For

For every tun containing
six small hogheads of
French wine imported im-
mediately from France,
all duties included, a-
mount to . . . 10 0 0

If it comes from any other part the
duty is higher.

For a tun of salt . . . 3 0

For every pound of tobacco 0 0 6

For every ox are paid at
Copenhagen . . . 2 0 0

For the same in any other
town . . . 1 0 0

For grinding every tun of
wheat weighing 824
pounds, the duty a-
mounts to . . . 5 0

For every tun of malt that
is prepar'd for beer in Co-
penhagen, is paid . . . 1 0 0

For the same in other towns 0 4 0

The

The book of rates by which these several duties have been settled, is of ancient date; but by an edict of the first of February one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven, the king has encreased the duty on brandy, enacting, that in the towns, every tun of wheat destined for that use, should be subject to a duty of fifteen marks, and every tun of rye, barley or other corn, fourteen marks; and with regard to brandy transported from one part of the country to another, it pays either six or ten schelings, according to the quality.

A tax has been lately laid on playing-cards. By ordinances of the nineteenth of November one thousand seven hundred and fifty six, and of the first of February one thousand seven hundred and fifty seven, every pack of cards pays a duty of six schelings; and the produce of this tax makes part of the funds appropriated

priated to the new hospital for three hundred sick, that the king has erected in Copenhagen.

But if these taxes are commended by all who reflect on the destructive consequences of the frequent use of spirituous liquors ; as well as on the uselessness, and, sometimes even, the unhappy effects of gaming : on the other hand, we shall be at a loss to find the same advantages resulting from the tax which has been laid on marriages for these very many years past.

It is true, indeed, that the most numerous as well as the poorest part of society, the peasants, sailors, soldiers, are not subjected to this tax. But if marriage in all stations ought to be encouraged by every method that can be contrived in its favor, the reasons must be still stronger against

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gainst burdening it with any charge.
The one laid here is indeed so very moderate, that it can form but a small obstacle to the progress of population.

Rixdal.

They who possess employments,
or are honored with titles
which give a rank in the state,
pay, each, on their marriage, 50

Noblemen who have neither title
nor employment 20

The clergy in the country, the
farmers, noblemen's stewards,
and the common inhabitants
in towns, pay on the like oc-
casion 4

Journeyman of any trade 2

Servants, porters, &c. in towns 1

Such are the duties which the
king receives from the inhabitants of
towns. But these are not their only
charges.

charges. Every town, in order to be exempted from quartering of soldiers, pays the garrison a certain sum, which is levied on every house in proportion to its size and situation. The magistrates assembled together with some of the principal inhabitants, regulate this imposition; and their determination is afterwards examined, and ratified or altered, by commissioners who are deputed from the several classes of the state.

The necessary expences for the preservation of order, and for the maintenance of useful establishments in towns, have also given rise to other kinds of taxes; the one called *grund-skatten*, which is levied on the ground on which the houses are built, and is proportioned to the extent of that ground; the other called *bye-skatten*, which is a kind of poll-tax, that is settled every year by

a certain number of the inhabitants, chosen by turns among the principal persons of the town. The produce of both is lodged in the city-treasurer's hands, in order to be employed by the magistrates for public uses.

Hitherto, Sir, I have considered separately the duties that are raised in the country and in towns. There remains another which is common to both, and by which I shall conclude. This relates to the stamped paper introduced in Denmark with the less inconvenience, as the fees that are paid in the courts of law are very moderate; and as private agreements can be entered into here without being obliged to go before a public notary. The examples that the following table shall contain, will give you a just idea of the nature and extent of this tax.

All

All obligations, contracts of sale, agreements of any kind whatever, must be written upon stamped paper, the price of which is in proportion to the sums specified in the deed.

Rix. Mar. Schel.

If the sum be under an hundred crowns, the stamp duty will be only 0 3 0

From an hundred to three hundred, it will amount

to 1 0 0

From nine hundred to twelve hundred 3 0 0

From four to five thousand 16 0 0

From nine to ten thousand 40 0 0

If the sum be above ten thousand crowns, the stamp duty amounts to fifty crowns, beyond which there is no farther encrease.

Acquittances must be also made on stamped paper, which is taxed at a cheaper rate than the former; if the sum be under an hundred crowns, it will cost twelve schelings.

The same paper must be used in pleadings. Decrees also that are granted in the sordreign court are wrote upon this paper.

Each of the three first sheets of which costs . . .

The same in the superior courts pays . . .

The same in inferior courts . . .

Summons, bills, petitions in the sordreign court, are written on stamped paper, which costs . . .

The same in the superior courts . . .

The

Rix. Mar. Schel.

The same in inferior
courts
Memorials presented to
the king must also be
drawn up on stamped
paper which costs . . . 0 1 8

This is not all: Every man who
possesses an employment, or obtains
a title which gives him a considera-
ble rank in the state, receives his pa-
tent on stamped paper, the price of
which is varied according to the im-
portance of the employment, or the
dignity of the title.

Rixdoll.

The duty on paper containing
letter-patents for the creation
of an earl, amounts to . . . 300

If a baron . . . 200

If declared a nobleman . . . 100

The patents for all employments that are included in the two first classes of what the Danes call the *Regulation of Ranks*, as the chancellor, minister of state, viceroy of Norway, privy counsellor, earl marshal, master of the horse, lord chamberlain; or as field marshal, lord high admiral, general, lieutenant general, major general, admiral and vice admiral, must be made out on stamped paper of an hundred crowns.

The patents of counsellors of state, of rear-admirals and commodores, of brigadier-general and colonels, and of bishops, are written on stamped paper that costs eighty crowns; and so on in a gradual descent, to the sum of four crowns, in that long series of titles which would certainly be sought after with much less eagerness and desire, if honor were not the

the true principle of monarchies. I must not forget to tell you, that the king often orders patents for employments to be given gratis to particular persons, and on particular occasions.

I purposely reserved to the conclusion of the detail of his majesty's revenues, to mention a duty peculiar to this kingdom, and one of the richest gems in the danish crown. I mean the toll that is paid by ships passing thro the sound.

These famous freights, where three thousand vessels pass every year *, are commanded by the fortrefs of Cronenbourg belonging to Denmark; and have the most remarkable aspect of any place in Eu-

* As each vessel passes twice the sound, several persons have computed the annual number to be six thousand.

rope. Two seas communicating by the means of a canal not above a league in length; the banks on each side beautiful and pleasing; the constant succession of vessels under sail, with opposite directions, form, together, the most agreeable and most singular prospect that can be imagined. The duty which is paid by all ships without exception, that enter or quit the Baltic by this canal, is founded on a custom established for many ages past, and which has been solemnly acknowledged by all trading nations. There are certain regulations settled among them, which produce a difference rather in the manner of payment, than in the sum agreed, which last is pretty much the same for all *. The Dutch, for

* The French, English, Dutch and Swedes pay one per cent; all other Nations, the Danes themselves not excepted, are obliged to pay a quarter per cent more.

example, who have so great a share in the navigation of the Baltic ocean, are credited on their passports; whereas the English are subject to the examination of officers appointed for that purpose. Tho' the tax varies according to the merchandise which these ships are laden with, I am however assured, that, on an average, it is about one per cent upon the whole. This branch of his majesty's revenues goes to his private treasury, which is encreased, besides, by the duties paid at the custom-houses of Berghen and Drontheim, and by the taxes which the town of Altona pays to the crown of Denmark. These several sums, principally intended for the king's personal expences, are also employed in the numberless liberalities with which he rewards and encourages every degree of merit, and every effort of industry throughout his dominions.

What

What I am going to say will meet with some difficulty to be believed, and yet nothing is more strictly true: at an age in which passions and pleasure multiply infinitely the desires of princes, his danish majesty has found the means of confining his personal expences within the narrowest compass. His great economy enables him to extend his bounty and benevolence to every corner of his kingdoms; and has procured plenty and ease to many of his subjects who were destitute of both. Ancient manufactories have been re-established; and new ones have been erected. He has founded a seminary of industry, where the children of the poor are taught the several branches belonging to those manufactories, against the decay of which from a want of hands, ample provision is thus, for the future made. The great encrease

encrease of commerce among his
 subjects is chiefly owing to his well-
 directed generosity; and every na-
 tion must admire a prince, who gave
 two millions two hundred thousand
 crowns by way of indemnification to
 the West-India company of Copen-
 hagen, in order to lay open the com-
 merce of the danish isles to all his
 subjects. The East-India company
 has also received marks of his favor.
 The academy of painting, sculpture,
 and architecture, owes its rise to his
 bounty; and the magnificence of the
 church which he has built as an or-
 nament to his capital, will be a per-
 petual proof of his encouragement
 and esteem of the polite arts. He
 has founded a general hospital for the
 sick and the distressed. And among
 the many obligations which the sci-
 ences lie under to this prince, we
 must not forget the excellent and cu-
 rious garden of botany which he has
 caused

caused to be erected. I only mean to
 give some instances of his majesty's pa-
 ternal care and regard towards every
 object which may redound to the
 ease, the plenty or satisfaction of his
 people. The principal facts I have
 mentioned. There are others, per-
 haps less glaring, but not less useful,
 and consequently not less honorable.
 Such are the pensions which he al-
 lows for travelling to men of parts
 and knowledge, as well as to students
 of promising abilities towards their
 further improvement in foreign uni-
 versities; besides the many bounties
 which he grants to particular artists
 and manufacturers, and the number-
 less gifts he bestows on persons de-
 serving encouragement or reward in
 any branch of commerce, as well as
 in any instance of genius or applica-
 tion. So much munificence, and
 such a conduct, point out a soul whose
 chiefest pleasure consists in doing
 good;

good; and can there, indeed, be a delight more noble or worthier of a prince? And, if notwithstanding these several expences, the king has been pleased to forgive all the peasants in his dominions a considerable part of the taxes that were to be levied on them in the years 1747, 1748, 1749, 1750, 1751, in consideration of the losses which they suffered by the disorder of the horned cattle; if he has relieved the inhabitants of the Marshes or low-lands of the dutchy of Holstein, whose possessions were destroyed by frequent inundations; we cannot but conclude, that a strict and wise economy may enable princes to pursue the most extensive plan of benevolence and generosity.

I have the honor to be,

SIR, &c.

LET-

LETTER the Twelfth.

*To mister N—— merchant at
Amsterdam.*

I BEG leave to address to you, Sir, the following short history of the origin, progress, and present condition of the several trading companies of this kingdom. My first knowledge of commerce is owing to the full and candid answers which you were always pleased to return to the questions I proposed, and to the doubts that arose in my mind, upon that subject. You have therefore a primary right to this essay. And what your modesty induces you to forget, my gratitude shall ever prompt me to remember. Accept the humble tribute which I offer to the skilful merchant,

chant, as well as to the true friend. Your observations and instructions will abundantly repay the greatest efforts that I can make.

Christian the fourth was the first who established an East-India company in Denmark. The discovery of the cape of Good-hope laid open to the northern nations this branch of commerce, which became, so soon as in the beginning of the last century, the source of wealth to Holland, and an object of emulation to the other maritim states. Christian the fourth was conscious of its importance; and accepted the offers made to him by a dutchman named Boschower, who, from a private factor, was become the emperor of Candy's favorite in the island of Ceylon. In one thousand six hundred and eighteen, three men of war were fitted out under the command

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of

of mister de Giedde, and sailed for the Indies, together with three ships belonging to the new established company. These last were under the conduct of Roland Crape.

Mister de Giedde's negotiation with the prince of Candy did not meet with the desired success. Boschower was dead; and with him was lost that credit on which the Danes depended most. But Crape purchased from the Naicke of Tanjaor on the coast of Coromandel a tract of land about a mile and an half from Carikal, on which have been since built the town of Tranquebar, and the fortress of Dansbourg. After this acquisition, which procured the company an establishment in the Indies, the trade thus happily begun, subsisted for sometime. But the smallness of the company's funds from the beginning, which, even in one thousand six hundred

dred and twenty-four, amounted to no more than one hundred and eighty nine thousand, six hundred and fourteen rixdollars, chiefly contributed to its decay. Christian the fourth had the dissatisfaction of seeing an end put to a branch of commerce, which was undertaken in consequence of his encouragement and protection. The proprietors gave him up their charter in lieu of several sums of money which he had lent to the company.

In the beginning of Christian the fifth's reign, a new society was incorporated by charter, bearing date the twenty-eighth of November one thousand six hundred and seventy. Its funds consisted in several ships and goods valued at seventy-nine thousand seventy-three rixdollars, which his majesty was pleased to bestow to the proprietors; who added

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to

to it, on their part, as a first common stock, the sum of one hundred sixty-two thousand eight hundred bank crowns. It is needless to enter into any detail concerning the transactions of this company, nor of the favors granted to it by the king on different occasions. Notwithstanding all the efforts made by that prince, and of his successor Frederic the fourth, in order to support it; the proprietors met with so many losses, that they were at last obliged to separate, and to give up their charter to his majesty, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty.

Frederic the fourth, who saw with great regret the decline of so useful a branch of trade, used every means to animate the drooping spirits of men who were discouraged by a continued series of difficulties and disappointments.

pointments. A new society was formed once more ; and the prince royal, who afterwards mounted the throne under the name of Christian the sixth, disdained not to become its president. This society meeting with success, soon gave way to a regular company incorporated the twelfth of April one thousand seven hundred and thirty-two ; and from this æra we may properly date the establishment of the East India company, which subsists to this day.

Its charter is limited to forty years ; and during that interval it enjoys the exclusive privilege of trading from the cape of Good hope to China. Nothing can be a better monument of the zeal that animated Christian the sixth towards encouraging commerce in his dominions. Every object is considered which may enable the company to trade with the strict-

est economy, and with the greatest freedom. All provisions intended for the East-India ships are exempted from paying any duty. The workmen employed in the company's service, are not subject to the regulations of their respective corporations. The proprietors are dispensed from making use of stamped paper in contracts or other business relating to the East-India trade. The company have besides a juridical power over all the persons belonging to it; and the sentences, which are passed by the directors whom they appoint, are subjected to no control, unless the punishment they ordain be capital; in which case alone, an appeal is liable to be brought before the supreme court. The disputes that may arise between the company or its clerks with strangers, are decided by an extraordinary tribunal composed of two directors, and three members of
of

of the supreme court. And what shews the great attention of his late majesty to remove the least appearance of constraint, is a particular clause inserted in the charter; by which it is enacted, that neither himself nor any other person of the royal family, notwithstanding their being proprietors, shall any way interfere in the election of the directors. With regard to the government of Tranquebar and of Dansebourg, he reserved to himself no more than the right of confirming the governors of each. The nomination of all the other officers is in the company's disposition; who also command the garrison they maintain there. They may enter into what treaties with the asiatic powers which seem most conducive to their interest; having the king's promises to ratify all. In return for these favors, his majesty demands but one

per cent on all Indian or Chinese merchandise re-exported from Denmark to foreign ports; and two and an half per cent on those which are consumed within the limits of his own dominions.

The charter I have mentioned, lays down the rules which are to be observed in the convention of the proprietors. In order that full liberty might be allowed of being more or less considerably interested in the enterprizes of the company, it was thought proper to distinguish two kinds of funds. The first designed for purchasing all the effects of the former company in Europe as well as in Asia, was formed by stocks or shares originally settled at two hundred and fifty crowns. The other fund is regulated every year according to the number of vessels, the cargo that they carry, and the expences

pences they require : a method which prevents the inconvenience of having large sums lying by ; and gives each proprietor an opportunity of accepting or declining a concern in every ship which is freighted by the company *. If one proprietor refuses, another may take his place ; and, when the fleet arrives at Copenhagen, an account is stated of the expence and profit of each particular vessel. Thus the company may be considered as a perpetual society with regard to the first fund ; and annual only, in relation to the second.

However, in order to encrease the perpetual fund which, indeed, is the support of the company, the proprietors have agreed, that after every sale made in Europe of India goods, ten

* A liberty, however, which no person has hitherto made use of.

per cent should be deducted from the produce of the whole, towards the augmentation of the perpetual fund; besides fix per cent on all merchandises that are exported from Tranquebar. Such is the foundation on which this East-India company was erected, and is supported to this day.

The private management of the company is laid down with the greatest care in the late rules to which the proprietors have agreed. In these, it is decided what expences should be borne by the perpetual, and what by the annual fund; which last, indeed, is troubled with little else than the purchase, equipment and cargo of the several vessels in the company's service.

The number of officers which the directors may employ is also settled,
and

and their several salaries determined, all of whom are very moderate. I shall not enter into particulars on this head ; but I think it necessary to give you some account of the general administration of the company's finances.

At first there were but four hundred shares ; but, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-four, each share being subdivided into four lesser ones, the funds of the company at present consist in sixteen hundred actions. The property of one of these shares entitles a man to a vote in the general assemblies of the company ; the proprietors of three shares, have two votes ; those of five, have three voices ; and so on in the same proportion to the number of twenty, which entitles the possessor to twelve votes ; and is the greatest influence that any one person

is allowed to enjoy. In these general meetings, the directors are appointed ; and the most important concerns of the company discussed, especially those relating to the expedition of shipping, the number of vessels to be employed, the disposition of money ; and the engagement of loans, which the directors have no right to enter into, without the consent of the proprietors.

The ordinary course of affairs is entrusted to a president who must be a nobleman of the first rank, and to four directors, one of whom must be a lawyer or a sea officer, and the other three, merchants. The president and directors manage the business of the company, in conjunction with the principal assistants who must be consulted in all important matters. These principal assistants are five in number : one of them must be a lawyer

yer or a sea-officer. They are obliged to oversee the company's books, to examin the clerks accounts, and to visit the warehouses. These are also the persons who give receipts, and grant discharges. A man must have eight shares before he can be a director or principal assistant. The merchant directors continue in their employment for the space of nine years; and the principal assistants quit not theirs, until they become directors.

The continual addition of ten per cent on the produce of every sale, and of six per cent on all merchandise exported from Tranquebar, had already raised, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine, the value of the perpetual fund of each ancient share to seven hundred and fifty crowns; to which sum it was thought proper to confine it, by a resolution of the seventeenth of July,

July, one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven. It was at the same time resolved, that the duties which had hitherto contributed to encrease the perpetual fund, should serve for the future to form a dividend of the same fund. However, in one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, the perpetual fund was doubled, and each ancient share was valued at fifteen hundred crowns; or three hundred and seventy-five crowns for the divided actions as they now stand. The same year the company revived its trade with Bengal, which had been for some time interrupted; and made some establishments on the coast of Nallabour, and in the islands of Nikobar.

The extension of the danish trade with the East-Indies was not the only good effect of the acquisition of Tranquebar. The piety of the kings
of

of Denmark have rendered it subservient to still nobler purposes. Tranquebar is become the center of a mission established for the propagation of the gospel among the idolaters. So far back as the year one thousand seven hundred and five, several zealous clergymen were sent there on that purpose. Their labors and those of their successors have not been fruitless. In one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, there were reckoned four thousand five hundred and seventy-one persons converted to christianity in the town of Tranquebar; and five thousand seven hundred and eighty-five, in the country. The ministerial function is at present performed by eight missionaries, two resident clergymen, and thirty-five assistant natives. They give an account from time to time of the progress they have made, and of the succor they stand in need of, to a council

cil appointed by his majesty for the propagation of the gospel; which is composed of a minister of state and two commissioners, one an ecclesiastic, and one a layman. These forward to the mission the supplies which the religious liberality of the king, and that of other charitable persons, enables them to grant. And among the other expences incurred for an object so worthy of a christian prince, the establishment of a printing-office for Portuguese and Malabarian characters, is so much the more remarkable, as it is the only one which the christians possess in Asia. From this press, a new edition has been lately published, of the old testament translated into Portuguese, and of the new into the tongue of Tamul; as well as several passages in different parts of the bible, that are particularly opposed to paganism.

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The detail I have entered into with regard to the East-India company, makes it unnecessary for me to be very long in my account of the other trading companies, all of which have many things in common with the first.

A society of insurance was formed in the year one thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven. It differs from others particularly in this point, that the proprietors need disburse no money. The shares are a thousand crowns a piece; and the contract is delivered on subscribing and bringing security for that sum. In one thousand seven hundred and forty-eight, the subscriptions amounted to six hundred thousand crowns. They cannot by their institution insure for above thirty thousand crowns on any one vessel, except an East-

Indiaman which may be insured as far as sixty thousand. The dividend is risen to nine per cent.

The bank, which may be looked upon as the very soul and spring of the trade of this country, owes its existence to a company which, by this means, has done considerable service to the state. The quickness of circulation which it has accelerated, and the great facility it has introduced, in commerce, are but small advantages, in comparison to the reduction of interest which it has also been the cause of. The proprietors have been considerable gainers by this undertaking; and I know of none whose profits should less in justice be envied by the public.

His majesty's patent for the establishment of a bank at Copenhagen, was

was dated on the twenty-ninth of October one thousand seven hundred and thirty six. Its notes passed current, from the very beginning, in all payments, to the royal treasury; as well as in the other offices of the king's revenues, without obliging any other person to accept them in lieu of cash; and his majesty promised, besides, never to borrow any sums of money from this society. In consequence of such encouragement, a subscription was opened in the month of November of the same year, consisting of a thousand actions at five hundred crowns a piece, which was immediately filled up. On the eleventh of March one thousand seven hundred and thirty-seven, the bank began its operations. It discounted the bills of creditable merchants; it lent out money at four per cent on valuable effects; and very soon succeeded in reducing to that rate the

interest of money throughout the kingdom, which had been before at five, or even at six per cent. Such sudden success makes it likely to suppose that interest may be reduced still lower by the continuation of the same means.

If it be considered of what importance it is to merchants, to command at any time, the sums of money which they want, and on so moderate a consideration, that they can afford to trade on an equal footing, and at as cheap a rate, as other nations: the weight of the obligation will be felt, which is justly due to the estimable author of this project. The dividend of this company has been from nine to twelve per cent, and the actions have risen in consequence from five hundred to twelve hundred and fifty crowns.

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The bank is governed by ten directors, three of whom must be noblemen; two, lawyers; and five, merchants. They are changed alternately; the nobles every two years, and the rest each succeeding year. There is a general meeting of the proprietors, annually on the eleventh of March, where accounts are delivered of the profits, losses, and actual state of the bank. In this assembly five merchants are also named to examine the accounts, and other books relating to the company's affairs. Two of these last are appointed to inspect, once a week, the cash remaining in the coffers of the company.

The *general company* incorporated by charter the fourth of September one thousand seven hundred and forty-seven, was principally established

with a view of rendering Copenhagen the sole mart of trade, on the borders of the baltic. It enjoys the exclusive privilege of the greenland trade, as well as the whale fishery on its coasts. It possesses no other exclusive commerce; and the state of languor in which it was lately fallen, abundantly proves with what little chance of success, a public company can undertake any particular traffic in competition with private merchants.

Its chief commerce consists at present in carrying fish, and, in general indeed, all the commodities of the baltic, such as timber, iron, copper, hemp, tar, leather, into France, Portugal, Spain and Italy; in return for wines, oil, almonds, raisins, coffee, silk, marble, salt and drugs. They also carry slaves to America from the coast of Guinea.

When

When the vessels return to Copenhagen, an account is published of their several cargos, which are afterwards sold by public sale.

The funds belonging to this company are divided into a thousand shares. There were paid at first three hundred crowns for each share; and the directors were empowered to draw for two hundred more on the purchaser of every action.

In the general meetings of this company held the twenty-ninth of March, and the thirteenth of April one thousand seven hundred and fifty-seven; the proprietors resolved to contribute, besides the sums already mentioned, two hundred crowns a piece: one hundred to be employed in extending the former branches of their commerce, and the other hun-

dred for the purchase of two hundred actions in the traffic which the Danes intend to carry on in the Levant.

The encouragements which his majesty has granted to this company with regard to the whale fishery ; the negro trade encreased of late by the cultivation of the american islands belonging to Denmark ; and the commerce of the Levant in which the general company has so great a share ; must, taken all together, necessarily revive the ancient vigor and flourishing condition of that company.

The management is entrusted to a president and six directors. Besides the administration of the affairs relating to this society, the same gentlemen have also the direction of the levant trade ; for the carrying on of which,

which, it has been resolved to create five hundred actions of five hundred crowns a piece: two hundred of which, I have already mentioned, are to be the property of the general company.

The african company was established the thirty-first of March one thousand seven hundred and fifty-five, in order to continue a branch of commerce which some private merchants had already in some measure undertaken. Its charter, which is granted for forty years, allows an exclusive privilege of traficking along the coast of Africa from the two and twentieth to the fix and thirtieth degree of northern latitude; and hitherto the trade has been most carried on in the ports of Saffy, Sally, and Santa Crux. The chief imports from thence are wooll, copper, leather, wax; and their cargos thither
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are generally composed of cloths, linen, spices, and other merchandise wanted in Africa from Europe. The funds of this company consist in five hundred shares, at five hundred crowns a piece. They gave a dividend in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-six, of ten per cent. The affairs of the company are conducted by a president and four directors.

I remain, SIR,

Your very humble servant.

LET-

LETTER the Thirteenth.

To the same.

I HAVE reserved, Sir, an account of the iceland company for a separate letter. The difference between this and the companies already described is extremely considerable; and arises from the manner of carrying on the trade, as well as from the nature of the country.

Iceland, originally peopled by a colony of Norwegians under the form of a republic, was united to the crown of Norway in the year one thousand two hundred and sixty two, in the reign of Haquin. Magnus, his son and successor, established laws in that island, in the year
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one thousand two hundred and eighty, which subsist to this day. It continued a considerable time the chief asylum of literature in the north. This frozen climate has produced some poets of a fine imagination; and a few historical writers whose genius shines forth amidst the darkness and barbarism of the ages they lived in. Its situation is between the sixty third and sixty seventh degree of northern latitude. One should naturally infer that the cold must be exceeding great. It certainly is not always so. The thermometer constructed according to m^r de Reaumur's directions did not descend lower, in the winter of the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-nine, by m^r Horrebow's observation, than the seventh or eighth degree below the freezing point. And what strongly confirms this assertion, and will probably appear fur-

surprizing, is this other fact, that the Icelanders never house their sheep: they are left exposed to the inclemency of winter nights, and are found able to withstand it; a privilege which England, among the nations of the north, was alone supposed to possess.

Iceland is one hundred miles long *, and about fifty broad. The number of its inhabitants bear a very small proportion to its extent. They scarce amount to an hundred thousand. The island is divided into one hundred and ninety-six parishes, which several reasons encline me to believe were formerly much more thickly peopled. It has not been hitherto able to recover from the havoc which several concurring cau-

* Fifteen danish miles make a degree.

ses had formerly spread around it. The black plague, which visited the northern climes in the fourteenth century, was particularly fatal to the icelanders; and, on a general aspect of the country, several traces still appear, which leave no room to doubt but that the eruption of volcanos must have produced strange revolutions in it.

Notwithstanding the barren appearance of this country, it is far from being destitute of commodities proper for commerce. Between the mountains, which are in great number, many valleys, abounding in pasture, are proportionably stocked. The icelanders are rich in cattle. Their oxen afford them leather; their sheep, wooll; and both, salt-meat. They find around their coasts vast quantities of fish; especially cod, of which they distinguish several kinds.

Whale-oil, sea-calves and dogs, woollen gloves and stockings, sulphur, a kind of coarse cloth known by the name of wadmél, and down, the best of which is called eider-down, are other articles of the trade of iceland.

You will be surprized to hear there is not a town in the whole island. Its inhabitants are dispersed along the coasts, never extending themselves beyond ten or a dozen miles up the country. Farther back nothing can be found but inaccessible rocks and precipices that are impassable. There are three and twenty frequented sea-ports in iceland, and the adjoining isles of westmanoe: from fourteen of which fish and oil are alone exported; seven entirely destined for salt-meat; and two where all are indiscriminately shipped for exportation.

tion. Whether the land be incapable of bearing wheat, or whether its cultivation has been neglected, the icelanders have been hitherto destitute of that valuable and essential commodity : a circumstance which renders their subsistence in some degree precarious ; for tho they make great use of dried fish with butter, yet they cannot contrive to live entirely without bread.

A perusal of the charter granted to the iceland company, shows the many fatherly precautions which have been taken by the kings of Denmark, for supplying the wants of that portion of their subjects which inhabit this island.

The company is obliged to furnish them in abundance with every thing necessary for their nourishment, as well as for their fishery ; the construction

struction of their boats; and the building of their houses. These materials must be landed at their several sea-ports. And in order to prevent imposition in the quality of each commodity, the king's officers are ordered to examin in the presence of two witnesses the cargo of every vessel; and are empowered to reject entirely if the quality be bad, or to lower the value if the price be over-rated, of every article aboard. On the other hand, the company is at liberty to refuse the iceland commodities if deemed not merchantable. The price of such as are approved is regulated by a table of rates established in the year one thousand seven hundred and two. This trade is mostly carried on by barter. His majesty, resolved that the icelanders should not be left at the discretion of a company erected to support them, has fixed the value of almost every

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article

article imported to iceland or exported from it. Thus bargains on either side are soon concluded. The icelander brings down his fish and salted meat, and finding by the book of rates the comparative price of what he sells, knows at once the quantity of flour or other merchandize which he may expect to receive in return. Flour, iron, biscuit, timber are valued so extremely low, that the company are often losers by the sale of these several commodities; but this loss is abundantly compensated by their great gains in fish, which they buy at a very moderate price. In this manner the advantages are reciprocal to the traders and the inhabitants. But the king's attention to the welfare of the icelanders extends still farther: it happens that the fishery not being equally successful every year, they are not always able to supply a quantity proportionable

nable to the foreign commodities they stand in need of. Upon these occasions, the company is obliged to supply their several wants without any immediate payment; and before the fleet sets sail from iceland, a sufficient reserve in their magazines must be left behind of flour and fish for the consumption of the inhabitants, till the following year. If the winter season obliges them to have recourse to these provisions, the king's officers are appointed to take down an accurate list of every person who applies for food, in order that the company may be afterwards reimbursed.

Such are the principal precautions taken by his majesty in favor of iceland, and inserted in the charter granted to the company trading to that island. This charter, which was to have expired in the year one

thousand seven hundred and fifty-three, after a standing of ten years, has been prolonged to the first of January one thousand seven hundred and seventy-one, in consideration of the commerce of finmark, which the same company has also undertaken. They are obliged to employ no other ships than those constructed at Copenhagen, and to deal entirely in the commodities and produce of the manufactories of the country. The icelanders are not allowed to trade with foreigners. The proprietors pay his majesty sixteen thousand crowns for the exclusive privilege they enjoy.

This company is not subjected to any out-duties on the merchandize it exports to iceland. But all iceland commodities consumed in Copenhagen, are subject to an excise tax. Those exported to other coun-

countries pay a duty only of one per cent.

The iceland trade is carried on in the following manner. The company's ships set sail from Denmark in the months of May and June, laden with the various sorts of goods which the icelanders generally demand. The chief of which consist in flour, iron, hemp, flax, cords and lines for fishing, hooks, hatchets and other instruments made of iron, several utensils in copper and in tin, timber for houses, tobacco, wine, salt, brandy, woollen and linen cloths, spices, &c.

The passage is generally about three weeks sail. As soon as the vessels arrive at their destined ports, they are immediately unloaded, and the cargos lodged in the magazines belonging to the company. The neighboring

inhabitants successively bring down the commodities which they had prepared for sale. The book of rates soon points out their respective value; and the exchange is made without difficulty or delay. The icelanders have however a power of insisting on being paid, and of paying, in ready cash. This is a right they scarcely ever exert. They seem contented with the regulations inserted in the book of rates, where the price of all commodities are compared to fish, which is indeed the common measure of all value. When the exchange is mutually made, the ships return. Those laden with fish and oil arrive in the beginning of September; the rest, whose cargoes chiefly consist in salted meats, follow in the months of October and November. Nineteen vessels are generally employed every year in carrying on this branch of commerce.

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Fourteen are destined for Copenhagen; and five for Gluckstadt, from which last place the iceland goods are transported up to Hamburgh.

The funds belonging to this company are divided into an hundred actions. The intrinsic value of each is two thousand crowns. Some years it has amounted to two thousand six hundred, and two thousand seven hundred, crowns. But they begin to fall.

Two causes contribute to this decline. The scarcity of fish, and mortality of sheep in iceland; and the augmentation of the price of wheat in Denmark. The company being obliged to furnish the corn at the same price, and not finding fish in sufficient plenty to compensate for this unusual dearness, must necessarily lose. On the other hand, the

icelanders are never in such want of flour as when their fishery is unsuccessful; and then is the time they are the least able to make an adequate return for it. In such an opposition of interests, complaints and discontent will naturally arise. Those the icelanders have made, brought about a new regulation. The board of treasury have given orders to the king's officers for that island, to draw up an account of the demands of every canton along the coast, in order to oblige the directors of the company to send sufficient supplies. Upon the whole however, that the trade of iceland is upon an advantageous footing for the company, as it most undoubtedly is so for the inhabitants, is evident, from the success which a former company incorporated in one thousand seven hundred and thirty-three, for ten years, is known to have met with. In that short

short space, besides a dividend of from six to eight per cent, the capital was almost doubled.

A society also has been formed in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty-two in iceland, for the general instruction of its inhabitants in agriculture, as well as in the construction of ships and large boats for fishing in the open sea, the method of properly preparing and salting fish, the manner of twisting and spinning, and even in making cloths.

This society has also invited over husbandmen, carpenters, and ship-builders from Norway; and manufacturers from Jutland. The sulphur-works which were abandoned are carried on anew under their inspection. Much is expected from the laudable zeal and endeavors of this society towards the improvement of iceland. And his majesty, ever attentive

tentive to the welfare of his most distant as well as his nearest subjects, has encouraged and enabled it to enlarge its plan by a gift of fifty thousand crowns.

The object of this society being extremely different from that of the company trading to iceland; many disputes between them must be expected to arise.

The society also have a fund. Its shares are at fifty crowns.

The commerce of finmark I have already mentioned is joined at present to that of iceland. The produce of both is pretty much the same, and is mostly exported for holland and the mediterranean.

The trade of the isles of *Ferroë* is carried on by the king. But the analogy between their productions and

and those of iceland, entitles me to mention them here. These islands, situated between iceland and the orkades, are twenty five in number. The largest are fifteen danish miles in length, and ten in breadth. Some are very small. Seventeen are cultivated; and are divided into thirty-nine parishes. They abound in pasture, and produce plenty of barley. They furnish also considerable quantities of wooll, salt-meat, tallow, hides and fish. The stockings for the army and navy are manufactured in these islands.

I am, Sir, &c.

LET-

LETTER the Fourteenth.

To the same.

SIR,

THE only means of enclining the balance of trade in favor of any country, is by diminishing the importation of wrought materials, and by encreasing the quantity of exports. A government cannot therefore pursue a more noble or extensive project than that of encouraging throughout the kingdom every branch of useful manufactures. It is in fact delivering the state from a tribute levied by foreign industry. Such undertakings will undoubtedly be imperfect in the beginning, and their performances may be even more expensive than the produce of coun-

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tries where similar manufactories have been improved and naturalized by time. But this is a transitory inconvenience, which laborious perseverance easily overcomes, and abundantly repays. Where the arts of commerce and of peace are fostered and encouraged, there artists will naturally multiply; from whose augmented number it unavoidably follows, that their works will every day become of a better quality, and of a cheaper price.

There had been formerly some manufactories established in this country. Towards the end of the last century tapestry was woven in the little town of Kiøge in Seeland; of which a suit of hangings still remains in the castle of Rosenburg. In one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight, woollen cloths were made at the invalid hospital in sufficient quantity

tity to supply the whole army. Frederic the third ordered that every regiment in his service should be clothed from thence; and his successors Christian the fifth and Frederic the fourth confirmed the same by their respective edicts; but it was under no settled regulation till after the general peace of the north, in the year one thousand seven hundred and twenty. At present it supplies as well the royal navy as the army. The expences are taken out of the king's treasury; and the managers deliver their accounts into the war-office.

The regulations which subsisted in the reign of Christian the fifth, are a proof that silks were made at that time in Copenhagen. But those which were wrought abroad still continuing to enjoy full liberty of admission into the danish territories, there

there was no possibility of improving the work, or extending the undertaking to any great degree. So that properly speaking the Danes must date the establishment of their manufactures no farther back than the reign of Christian the sixth. Sensible of their importance, and seconded by some favorable circumstances, that prince laid the foundation for this chief branch of commerce which has been constantly encreasing under the reign of his successor the present king. The bold and difficult enterprise of introducing foreign arts into a country where they had hitherto been totally unknown, required a discerning protection and a beneficent hand to support and animate the efforts daily made. With this view, the resolution was taken of creating a council of commerce and general economy, which is employed in examining and reporting to his
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majesty every project that may tend to render his kingdoms richer or more flourishing; as well as in distributing to the industrious, the royal favors which they may stand in need of. Trade, manufactures, agriculture in Denmark and Norway, that of the dutchies of Sleswig and of Holstein, and the fishery, are the five divisions of this society; and are under the separate direction of as many noblemen, who preside by turns at the board. In order to facilitate the operations of the council of commerce, to which it would have been impossible to attend and enter into the minute and unbounded detail of new or growing manufactories, Christian the sixth established a committee, or subordinate office under the name of directors of the general magazine, composed of four principal commissioners, a cashier, and a store-keeper, with several

veral clerks. It was at first intended that this magazine should be provided with all sorts of necessary materials for manufactories, bought from the first hand, and at the lowest price, in order to supply the artificers at prime cost; whose work the directors were ready to purchase, paying for the same either in cash, or in raw materials. In a few years, the magazine was filled with cloths and stuffs of every kind. Shopkeepers and retailers little enclined to second the projects of the government, still continued to buy their goods at foreign markets. It was easy to prevent the contents of the magazine from remaining unsold, by prohibiting the importation of foreign merchandise of the same kind, or by encreasing the duty on the entry of those with which the home-manufactory could not supply the whole kingdom. An apprehension of such

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a tax or general prohibition, induced the dealers to enter into a private agreement with the directors; to import only such goods as could not be had at the magazine, under the penalty of a pecuniary fine for the first and second transgression, and an incapacity of dealing for the third. A certificate was to be granted by the directors, when the goods demanded could not be furnished by them. But the articles of this agreement, however reasonable in themselves, were not observed by the merchants. It therefore became necessary to take other measures. In the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty-nine, his majesty enforced by an edict, that which was before a voluntary contract between the dealers and directors. These last were allowed at the same time, to sell both by wholesale and retail; and the duties on the entries of several foreign commodities

modities were encreased. Thus the future state of the danish manufactories was effectually provided for. But it yet remained to hinder the merchants from unjustly enjoying the fruits of having infringed their agreement. An alternative was therefore proposed either to pay the additional duty for the stock in hand, or else to undergo the penalties of the original agreement. Their choice was soon made. They all consented that the stock in hand should be rendered liable to the new tax. One fourth of the sums thus due to the exchequer was immediately paid. The three remaining parts have not been hitherto demanded.

The permission which had been granted to the directors to sell their goods in retail, was undoubtedly prejudicial to the interest of other traders. But no probability appeared of

disposing otherwise of home-made commodities, while every shop was crammed with foreign manufactures. His majesty found himself at length obliged to forbid the sale of these last. He ordered the shop-keepers to deliver all the woollen stuffs or cloths which came from foreign markets, into the hands of commissioners appointed for that purpose, together with the bills of parcels and receipts; and in return, to receive the wares of the same kind which the magazine contained. The order was obeyed; and the change was made. The foreign goods were sent abroad for the king's account: and, on the other hand, the sale of goods by retail was confined to those to whom originally it belonged. There still remained goods in the general magazine of an inferior quality, tho' bought equally dear at a time when the manufactories were yet in an imperfect

perfect and unimproved condition. They were offered to public sale; and the loss, tho not inconsiderable, was sustained by his majesty.

The rise and progress of industry, the obstacles it must overcome, and the care its cultivation requires, are points of so interesting a nature; that I thought the account I have given you of the board of trade, which is the very soul of the manufactures of this country, would be worthy your attention, as well as pleasing to a mind which is desirous of the general prosperity of mankind. It remains to mention the various regulations relating to this new establishment.

The inferior council of commerce was originally instituted for the following purposes: to oversee the conduct of tradesmen; to give them assistance in preparing, and proper

opportunities of selling, their several manufactures; and to take care that the regulations of his majesty and council be exactly obeyed in every particular concerning the manufactories of the kingdom. In consequence of which, such tradesmen as are allowed credit at the general magazine, have power of sending to the first hand for the different materials necessary in their respective occupations, with an order for payment upon the directors of the magazine. These raw materials are received accordingly, and paid for, by the directors, who deliver them to the worker at prime cost, giving him trust, and desiring no interest. Every tradesman is credited for a stated sum. Formerly the directors bought the unwrought materials: but being obliged to deliver them to the workmen always at the same rate, and consequently never selling, but
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when the market price was superior, or at least not inferior to that of the magazine; the directors, to avoid the constant losses that ensued, discontinued to make any purchases on their own account.

A tradesman who finds not immediate sale for a piece of cloth, and yet wants money, may, on sending his work to the magazine, receive two thirds of its value, the remaining part to be paid as soon as the cloth is disposed of.

When a woollen draper does not chuse, or is not able, to pay ready money to the clothier for the pieces which he purchases, he passes his notes for the sums, and specifies at the same time the quality, price, measure and numbers of the cloths for which he stands indebted. This note is paid upon demand at the ma-

gazine, and eighteen months credit granted to the woollen-draper, at the rate of four per cent.

If the court, the provinces, the great trading companies call for any quantity of goods from the manufactories, the directors become voluntary factors on the occasion. They send out orders for these commodities to the several tradesmen, in proportion to what each master can prepare; and are never wanting in lending their assistance when difficulties arise from necessitous circumstances, which might retard the speedy execution of their orders.

Woollen and filken stuffs, and in general indeed all manufactures, after having passed the hall, must be carried to the magazine, where they are marked without expence. An exact account of every piece is taken down

down by the clerk, to which is joined a specimen of the cloth, its measure, number, and workman's name. All pieces found in shops or ware-houses, of which corresponding patterns have not been left at the magazine, are immediately declared to be counterband.

The first fund which his majesty appropriated to the magazine, was a reserve of ten per cent, in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty seven, on all salaries and pensions; the value of which was afterwards returned in merchandize to the contributors, by an edict of the twenty sixth of August of the same year.

I have already observed that the merchants who, contrary to their agreement, had imported foreign manufactures, were rendered subject to the

the duties on their stock in hand upon the footing of the additional tax on wrought materials bought at foreign markets. They were, however, obliged to pay a dividend only of one quarter, which was given to the magazine; but its principal funds are drawn from the king's treasury, and the loans which are authorised by the board of trade, of which his majesty pays the interest yearly.

The most considerable manufactures are those in wool and in silk. They supply all the demands of the kingdom; and if, on the one hand, it be granted that the prices are as yet considerable, we must allow on the other, that their quality comes nearest to the finest and most curious kinds. There are, in the city of Copenhagen alone, one hundred and fifty looms for woollen cloths, and

and one hundred and seventy nine
for those of silk.

In imitation of the woollen manufactures that are carried on in the capital and in the provinces, an establishment of the like kind has been also lately made in Iceland. That country furnishes great quantities of the coarser sort of wool, which is proper for cloathing the land and sea forces; and for whom the produce had been hitherto employed of Mecklenburg and Poland. Within these few years the manufactory of the lighter woollen stuffs has increased with great success in Copenhagen and other towns of Denmark.

It may be added, that the arts of war, as well as those of peace, are by no means neglected among the danes. They have powder-mills, gun-

gun-manufactories, and salt-petre works in sufficient plenty.

In different parts of the kingdom there are various works for producing vitriol and alum.

Earthen ware of all kinds is made in abundance by the danes. They have both delft and china manufactories.

The towns of Randers in Jutland, and of Odensee in Fionia, are famous for their tan-yards. They also export large quantities of gloves, which are esteemed by foreigners. The laces of Tondern are very well known abroad; and the linens of Sleswig and Oldenburg always meet with a good market *.

* I forbear to mention the manufactories of Norway, nor of the sugar works; as they are to be particularly described elsewhere.

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The stampd-cotton business, which was long confined within the narrow limits of an exclusive privilege in favor of a few persons, begins now to be more extended. His majesty, sensible of the ill consequences to trade attending such an exclusion, and at the same time consulting the justice due to every individual in his possessions or privileges, as well his regard to the commercial interest of his kingdom in general, has been pleased to purchase his own grant from the proprietors, for twelve thousand crowns. The East-India company furnishes in abundance the pano-comprido, the salampuris, and other cotton linens which this manufactory requires. Before I quit this article, I must observe to you, Sir, that woad and madder are cultivated in this country with success; and serve

serve for dying cloths intended for the army.

Nothing can convey a juster idea of the gradual progress of industry throughout the danish dominions, than an account of the successive prohibitions which have been laid on foreign manufactures from time to time, according as they could be supplied at home.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty five the duties on refined sugar were encreased; and in one thousand seven hundred and fifty, when the danish sugar-works were able to supply a sufficient quantity for home-consumption, it was absolutely prohibited.

The mines of this country furnish iron in abundance. It were, indeed, a mark of great inattention or idleness

ness to export the whole in bars, in order to import back as much as should be wanted of it wrought; and this is provided against by mills and other works which were not very long ago erected for the several utensils that are made of iron, as well as for those in copper. The entry of such goods from abroad, particularly scythes and sickles, has been expressly forbidden in 1735, and the prohibition was extended to brass wire or beat brass in the year 1737.

The importation of sieves was prohibited in 1739; as were green soap, beat-gold and sealing-wax in 1741; foreign hats in 1742; the works of ribbon-weavers in 1744; peeled-barley, iron cards for combing in 1748; smoaking-pipes in 1751; fuller's earth in 1752; and playing-cards in 1756. As to silk-stuffs, it being impossible for the manufac-
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turers to bring their brocades at once to the degree of perfection at which other nations are arrived after the experience and practice of above a century ; their importation, as well as use, was absolutely prohibited by an edict of Christian the sixth, in the year 1736. This edict, however, left free entrance to every kind of silk-stuffs, except brocades. But this liberty was taken away in 1741 ; when it was found that the manufactories of the country, and the East - India trade furnished all sorts of silks in sufficient abundance. Serges and other woollen stuffs, which are used for linings, have not been allowed to be imported from foreign markets since the year 1736. The entry or sale of broad-cloth made in other countries was entirely prohibited in 1741. Notwithstanding these several precautions, large quantities were daily smuggled into the

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the kingdom under various names and in various forms. This the king was fully determined to prevent; and published in one thousand seven hundred and fifty three, his royal declaration, forbidding all persons to import, employ or wear any kind of foreign-made woollen or filken stuffs whatever; and in order to forward every incitement towards the encrease of industry among his own subjects, he has prohibited in general the importation of any manufactures from abroad, which relate to the dress or attire of either sex.

Merely to exclude the produce of foreign labor was not answering the end originally proposed: still it remained to replace by national industry that which had been formerly imported from other countries. And this his majesty, together with a minister who entirely lays himself out to em-

prove and encourage the manufactures that are entrusted to his care, have taken every method to procure.

The king has granted to a company of traders on the most advantageous terms the silk-manufactory, which belonged to the crown; without subjecting them scarce to any other obligations for their favor, than that of keeping an hundred looms in constant employment.

One of the principal cloth manufactories was fallen into decay. His majesty was creditor for a very considerable sum. But instead of availing himself of this circumstance, he has given up the debt to the son-in-law of the first undertaker, together with other bounties which contribute greatly to make the business flourish at present in his hands.

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The island of Taassing was inhabited by about four hundred german artisans who manufactured slight woollen stuffs. I have seen that number much encreased within these last few years, many being sent thither by express orders of his majesty, but still more being induced to go there from the reputation of his royal beneficence and generosity. The expectations of those who were not unreasonable in their demands, nor excessive in their wishes, have been fully answered. Not an industrious man has been suffered to lie idle for want of the opportunity, or the means of exercising his business. It were an infinite undertaking to enumerate all those who have experienced the king's benevolence and protection.

Among the many good consequences of this uninterrupted liberality

lity to the laborious and deserving it is worthy of being remarked that the number of manufacturers, who, at his present majesty's accession to the throne in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty six, were not above twelve hundred in the whole city of Copenhagen, exceed at present the number of four thousand. Thus two thousand eight hundred men at least, who were maintained abroad at the expence of Denmark, are now become useful subjects at home. The revenue is enlarged by the taxes levied on them; and agriculture encouraged by the greater quantity of provisions that are consumed.

They encrease by their consumption the business of artisans of other professions, and by augmenting the populousness, they undoubtedly add real force and power to the state.

I

Such

Such are the benefits of commerce, and by these we must judge of the good his majesty has procured to his dominions, by the encouragement and favor he has shewn to it.

Every alteration that is made in any branch of the administration must in its consequence cause some momentary loss to a few individuals among those who gained most by the institution that is revoked. This was the case in the general prohibition in one thousand seven hundred and fifty three, of all kinds of filken and woollen manufactures imported into Denmark. And tho the dealers in these commodities had but little reason to complain of an edict which in fact was no more than a renewal of ancient ordinances; yet his majesty, thro that paternal goodness which he manifests towards the meanest of his subjects in distress, has

granted them sufficient assistance to establish themselves in other branches of trade.

The natives of Denmark who have proposed useful establishments, have been always encouraged preferably to foreigners. And if these last are employed where the first are found deficient, the danish nation, instead of having any right to murmur, ought undoubtedly to applaud such measures. To carry manufactures to perfection, and to diminish the price of labor, no more effectual method can be put in practice than that of stirring up a competition among the several manufacturers. And how can such an emulation with any success take place without the assistance of able and experienced foreigners? You, Sir, who are a witness of the prosperity of a country to which nature seems to have denied every thing

thing but industry, must be sensible that population has been one of the principal sources of its opulence. How very different its situation at present would be, if strangers had been discouraged, instead of being invited, to settle in it. Were there a spot upon the globe where the natives might have some plausible foundation for reserving to themselves the few resources the country naturally offered, it must be Holland. But that wise people have followed a very opposite system of politics. Free access is allowed to all nations without any respect to parties or opinions. The industrious man of any country or religion is immediately made welcome, and treated as a fellow-citizen. No invidious distinctions are pretended to be made between him and the ancient inhabitants. They who travel thro the united provinces, behold with amazement the happy

consequences of such a conduct. Plenty has arisen from the midst of poverty and famine. Industry has chosen its chief seat in the territories of the dutch ; and skilful foreigners, naturalized in Holland, have assisted a nation, formerly paying tribute to its neighbors, in obliging them all to contribute in their turn, towards its present prosperity and grandeur.

His danish majesty was sensible of these political truths from the very beginning of his reign ; and doubtless these were the principles which guided him in the edict which he published the twenty ninth of October one thousand seven hundred and forty eight, granting several privileges and immunities to those who should settle in his dominions. He has also given to manufactures a new support in the
house

house of charity which he has lately caused to be erected ; with a view of being at the same time a school for industry, an asylum for poverty, and a resource for decayed and decrepid tradesmen. Two hundred children, a number which I suppose will hereafter be considerably increased, are maintained in an hospital built for that purpose, and brought up betimes in the practise of every method which may afterwards contribute to render them good seamen or useful artisans. Every tradesman has a power of chusing from this nursery the number of apprentices his occupations require, on paying fifty crowns for each. This consideration entitles the master to a service of nine years from the boys, without his being under any additional obligation, but that of maintaining them during their apprenticeship.

prenticeship; which being expired,
they are free.

Give me leave, Sir, to conclude
my subject and my letter with as-
surances of the sincerest respect, &c.

LET-

LETTER the Fifteenth.

*To monsieur Cornabé, colonel of a
regiment of foot, and major-general
in the service of their high mighti-
nesses The States-general of the
United-Provinces.*

S I R,

WERE your great knowlege
in military affairs accompa-
nied with a less indulgent disposition,
I should not have attempted to lay
before you the few observations I
have made concerning the army of
Denmark. I can warrant, it is
true, the certainty of the facts. But
a happy discernment in matters of
judgment and experience, can be-
long only to a man of the profession.
It were necessary to take notice of
every

every particular which would appear important to a skilful commander ; and it were necessary to take notice of these alone. My ambition cannot reach so far. This sketch is offered merely as a proof of my desire to please you. And I form no other pretence.

The army of Denmark is composed of regular troops and a national militia. The state of the peasants occasions the regular forces being chiefly composed of foreigners, who are for the most part enlisted in Germany.

Before the revolution which changed the form of government in Denmark, few foreign troops were employed in that service, but when particular circumstances required their assistance. Mister Holberg mentions,

tions, that soon after that memorable era, Frederic the third resolved to maintain constantly in pay twenty four thousand regular forces, cavalry and infantry.

However, the cavalry still remained dispersed about the country when Frederic the fourth ascended the throne. That prince, in a reign not altogether free from misfortunes, was founder of many important establishments. He formed the project of uniting into one body the several divisions of cavalry which had hitherto been always kept asunder among the peasants, who were obliged to maintain these military guests. He established twelve garrisons or quarters in his own domains, or on the estates he purchased. These lands were obliged to supply forage to the different regiments. Six of the

the garrisons were situated in Sealand, one in Fionia; three in Jutland; one in Lalland, one in Falster, and, what deserves to be remarked in peculiar praise of that monarch is, that, being equally attentive to the education of the children, as to the discipline of the fathers, he instituted two hundred and forty schools in the quarters destined for the cavalry.

The danish cavalry, which is supposed to be one of the best mounted in Europe, consists in eleven regiments, each subdivided into four squadrons, among whom that of the guards is particularly distinguished. Besides these horse, there is also one regiment of dragoons.

Of these twelve regiments, three are now quartered in Sealand, two in

in Fionia, three in Jutland, and four in Holstein, in consequence of dispositions made since the time of Frederic the fourth.

The infantry of Denmark consists in sixteen regiments ; two of which belong to the king's guards. Each regiment is composed of two battalions, containing six companies, of an hundred men to a company. In this list I have not included a regiment of invalids, containing fifteen companies of an hundred men ; nor four other companies of invalids which are garrisoned in Norway.

There are three regiments employed in the service of the artillery, one of which is in Denmark, another in Norway, and the third in Holstein. The corps of engineers is divided into three parts, each of which is

is composed of twenty officers of different ranks.

These, Sir, are only a small portion of his majesty's forces. The national troops form by much the most considerable share. In order to explain the nature of this national army, it is proper to observe that every proprietor of sixty tuns of hart-korn, is obliged to find a man for the militia; and every two proprietors, a man for the reserve. The militia forms the national regiments. These have all uniforms. The reserve has none; nor is it called out on service at stated times, being rather considered as a resource which is ready on pressing occasions.

By a repartition settled according to the extent of land, and in the proportion already mentioned, Denmark furnishes four regiments of twelve

twelve companies, each company containing one hundred and fifty private men, besides commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

The dutchies of Sleswig and Holstein, the county of Rantzau, and the lordship of Pinneberg, where the militia is levied also in proportion to the extent of ground, furnished in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty seven, era of the establishment of the militia, two thousand four hundred and seventy three men formed into regiments. His majesty having thought proper, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty six, to exempt several districts from the obligation of raising men, these regiments are at present reduced to the number of eighteen hundred and thirty two men.

Y

The

The militia of the counties of Oldenburg and of Delmenhorst is founded on the same principles. These two provinces levied, in one thousand seven hundred and thirty eight, a regiment of twelve hundred men, which was afterwards reduced to six hundred.

Norway is the place which raises the greatest share of the national army. In this part of his majesty's dominions, where every man is free, the militia is on another footing, and levied in a different manner. Excepting the sea-coasts reserved for the use of the fleet, and the bailiwicks of nordland and finmarken, which are exempted from the militia by a special privilege; all the rest of the country is subjected to it. The whole kingdom is divided for that purpose into certain districts, or lægde,

lægde, according to the language of the country, each of which furnishes a trooper or foot-soldier, maintained by the inhabitants of the district. The peasants of Norway are all registered as soon as they are born in the rolls of the militia. And the most ancient in the district are obliged to supply the place of those who are wanted in the regiments. After having served ten or fourteen years, they enter the body of troops named landvårn, who are employed in the garrisoning of towns. And as soon as they become the oldest in the corps, they receive their discharge.

This method procures for his majesty five regiments of dragoons, each of which contains eight companies of eighty private men, and two others of landvårn of one hundred and twenty men, besides commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

The national infantry in Norway consists in thirteen regiments, each containing twelve companies of an hundred men, and four landwehr companies of an hundred and fifty private men, besides the commissioned and non-commissioned officers. I must not omit to mention also eight companies of skielöbere, a kind of light troops, who by their dexterity in running up and down mountains, and sliding in skates along the ice, are extremely useful in these provinces. The commissioned and non-commissioned officers of all these national troops are paid pretty much upon the same footing with the regular forces; but the private men are paid only while they are employed; during which time their pay is equal to that of other soldiers. Tho these troops are of very little expence to the government, yet they are

are exercised every Sunday after divine service, and are assembled together besides, once or twice a year, in order to go thro' all the military evolutions. Thus good soldiers are trained up for the army; as well as good officers provided by the martial academy founded in one thousand seven hundred and fourteen, by Frederick the fourth, where every thing is taught becoming young men of quality, and proper to form them in the art of war.

The military department is mostly entrusted to a general officer, who is obliged to give up the command of any particular corps as soon as he arrives at this dignity, in order to avoid the temptation or the suspicion of the least partiality. This minister presides at the war-office. To him are addressed all memorials or propositions concerning the military

state, the promotion of officers, and the administration of justice in the army, as well as the maintenance of discipline. He makes his report to the king, and signifies the royal intention to the person concerned, in those cases which do not require resolutions signed by his majesty; and in those that do, the same minister counter signs them.

Every thing relating to the expence of the army, the payment and cloathing of the troops, the supplying the magazines, the construction and repair of fortified towns, belongs to a particular department, called the general board of war, where the minister generally presides. This department, at present composed of six persons, examines the various matters I have just mentioned. Their resolutions are reported to his majesty by the minister of war.

The

The king allows a settled sum out of the treasury every year to this board for the ordinary expences of the army. But when any extraordinary expences are found necessary, particular application must be made to his majesty.

Frederic the fourth having resolved, in one thousand seven hundred and nineteen, to have all the troops in his service cloathed with the produce of danish manufactures, directions were given accordingly to the board of war, who have in consequence established a manufactory that supplies the whole army. Each regiment is new clothed every three years. The colonel receives from the board the quantity of cloths sufficient for that purpose. The king pays him the price of the trimmings and making of every suit of clothes.

With regard to the rest of the soldiers apparel, such as shirts, stockings, shoes, hats, the captain of each company is generally the person who with the consent of the colonel receives the money, and makes the purchases for the men. Each regiment has its quarter-master, who is properly the agent of the regiment. He is the person appointed to receive from the board or the treasurers in the provinces, the different orders for the payment of the troops. As the officers receive but a part of their pay monthly, and the remainder or arrears at the end of every three months, the quarter-master supplies them in the mean time with the sums they may stand in need of. All officers from the colonel to the ensign is paid directly by his majesty, and can retain no part of the pay of the private men. If some small profit arises to the colonels and captains from

from the cloathing of the troops, it is by his majesty's consent, who allows on this account a larger sum to be delivered for that purpose.

The revenues of a company consist not however merely in the captain's pay, which in the cavalry amounts to five and twenty crowns a month, and in the infantry to twenty crowns. Every captain has a power of dispensing with the service of a certain number of soldiers, called *freemen*. These men, who, for the most part, belong to particular trades, apply to their respective businesses, as soon as they are exempted from duty; and untill their return, their pay belongs entirely to the captains. This arrangement encreases considerably their revenue; and supplies, at the same time, the expences of raising recruits, for which purpose the king allows, besides, two hun-

hundred and fifty crowns a year in the cavalry. The advantage arising from the friemend is much more considerable in the infantry than in the cavalry. And on this account, as well as the additional consideration of recruits being easier raised for infantry, his majesty allots for that purpose no more than one hundred and fifty crowns a year.

I must mention that, in this as in every other branch of the administration, the most exact measures have been taken to prevent the captains abusing of their authority over their men, or defrauding the king in any particular.

All recruits, according as they enter into the kingdom, are registered at the first public office; and the death of every soldier is exactly inserted.

serted in the book of the regiment to whom he belonged.

Independent of the reviews which are made by commissaries appointed for that purpose, each captain is obliged to lay before the board every year an account of the state of his company, which is afterwards verified by the colonel: so that in order to suspect the slightest misconduct or deceit, it is necessary to suppose an underhand combination as odious in its nature, as it would be difficult in its execution.

The regular forces are distributed in the several forfeited places belonging to his majesty; at Copenhagen, where there is generally a garrison of eight thousand men; at Cronenbourg, Corsoer, Nybourg, Fredericia, and Hastrand. These are all situated in Denmark.

The

The principal fortresses in the dutchies of Sleswig and Holstein are Rendsbourg, where five thousand men are in garrison; Gottorf, Frederichshorth, Gluckstadt, Histerschantze, Helgoland, and Steinburger-schantze; and in the county of Oldenbourg; Oldenbourg, and Apen.

Norway is protected by several fortified towns, the chief of which are Friderickstadt, Friderichsteen, Aggerhuus, Kongwinger, Blaker, Christianfand, Bergen, Drontheim, and Wardeehaus, which last is without doubt the most remote fortress in the world, being situated about the seventy-first degree of north latitude; from which if you consider the distance to Gluckstadt in the fifty-fourth degree of northern latitude, you may judge of the great extent of
of

of ground over which his danish majesty commands. The several troops of this country are continually exercised and kept in motion. The king, who is conscious that the most efficacious method of preserving that peace in his dominions, which he employs so carefully and so successfully in promoting the happiness of his people, is always to be in readiness for war, has thought proper within these few years past, to have camps constantly formed either in Denmark or in Holstein, where his troops are instructed and made perfect in all the exercises and motions that relate to the art of war.

As military justice differs, at least with regard to form, in the several countries of Europe, give me leave

to

to add a few observations on this head.

All those who belong to the army depend upon the military jurisdiction alone; and even in civil actions which are commenced against either officers or soldiers, the cause must be brought before a council of war.

A council of war in each regiment is always composed of thirteen persons, the colonel, who presides at least when the life or honor of the accused is concerned, two captains, two lieutenants, two ensigns, two serjeants, two corporals, and two private men, if a soldier is to be tried; always avoiding as much as possible that the inferior should be judge over his superior. All the officers become members of this council by rotation, and change at every trial. Each class, in the order I have

have mentioned them, has the privilege of one voice.

This council has the first cognizance of civil and criminal matters. The auditor or judge-advocate, who must belong to the law, directs the proceedings in criminal affairs, takes the opinions of the members, and draws up the sentence, which is afterwards delivered to the auditor-general. This magistrate gives his opinion upon the whole to the minister of war, who reports it to his majesty when capital punishment or any mark of infamy is decreed.

In civil matters, when an appeal is sued from the decree of the council of war, it must be brought before an extraordinary council appointed by the king for that purpose, and partly composed of general officers. Some people imagin, what is
not

not however entirely free from objections, that in order to render the administration of justice in the army more settled, more expeditious and less expensive, it were proper to erect a tribunal always subsisting for the sovereign decision of all military causes.

But an object still more desirable is the building of barracks in the several fortified towns.

It were difficult, methinks, not to perceive the use of such an establishment. I shall leave you judge, Sir, of some observations on this head made by a general-officer, whose capacity I will not take upon me to determin, but of whose kindness and friendship I have some reason to boast. By the erecting of barracks the soldiers would have a healthier and more convenient habitation. By
being

being distributed into several regular apartments and distinct messes, they might be better fed and at a cheaper rate. Soldiers thus kept together acquire and cultivate that general spirit which is the great incitement to bravery.

The comfortable situation of the soldiery might contribute to the populousness of the nation. And why should the state neglect this means of encreasing the number of its members? It is really an error, as I am assured by the general officer, who is my guide in this article, and who has considered attentively the various branches of his profession, it is an error to suppose, that a man is a better soldier for not being married. A wife and children, especially in an army chiefly composed of foreigners, are a pledge to the state of his fidelity and good behaviour. It might

Z be

be a means of securing the return of a soldier, to leave his family in the barracks while the troops are in campaign; and it would also free the army from many attendants, who, if not dangerous, are inconvenient at least and unnecessary. The government would always have it in their power to regulate the education of the children of the soldiery. And such attention, as it is strongly dictated by humanity, so it is also conformable to the views of true policy, which prepares from afar every member of the commonwealth to be one day useful to it. The objection made to this establishment might easily be turned into a proof of its utility; and it might be added also, that by finding habitation for the soldiers in barracks, a multitude of futlers, publicans and victuallers are deprived of the opportunity they otherwise enjoy of living at the expence

pence of the soldiers; and thus consequently is restored to manufactures, where too many hands cannot be employed, and indeed to society in general, a number of men whose occupations had been hitherto of no advantage to trade, or to the public.

Considerations of such weight have not probably escaped the wisdom of a government incessantly employed in rendering perfect every branch of the administration. And we should readily suppose that the expence alone delayed the execution of this project, were it not easy to demonstrate, that the sums actually levied for the lodgment of the troops, are fully sufficient to put the method now proposed in practice. With proper economy it might even have been possible to free the subjects in a few years of an assessment on this

account, which by encreasing the expence of house-rent, is so far an obstacle to the progress of manufactures. There is therefore no room to doubt but that this affair will at length be seriously taken into consideration, and determined in favor of an establishment which the troops have so many motives to desire, and which must contribute so considerably to augment the reputation of the service. In fact, according to the same gentleman, whose ideas on this occasion I only transcribe, this must be the foundation of whatever measures may be taken to improve the state of the army. As soon as the soldiery is known to be on a good footing, it will be easy to chuse proper recruits among the numbers who will offer to enlist; and when enclosed in barracks, nothing can be easier than to inculcate and maintain by proper discipline that warlike spirit

rit in their breasts, which alone renders an army formidable to the enemy. The grand object of a state is not so much to have a numerous army, as to have a good army. And the king of Denmark is perhaps the prince in Europe, who, by the happy situation of his territories, can best do without a large body of troops, at least towards the south. The entrance of Holstein is so narrow, that from Hamburgh to Lubeck there are but eight leagues distance. This country is beside so crossed with rivers, lakes, and marshes; the advantageous posts are so numerous; Rendsbourg and Gluckstadt are so happily placed for their mutual assistance; the two seas that wash the coasts of Holstein afford such facility of conveying troops wherever they are found necessary; that a very small body of troops

Z 3

well

well conducted would be capable of stopping the most numerous armies.

This account of the forces of Denmark would have been too often interrupted, had I remarked as I went along, the share the king now reigning has had in bringing it to its present state. I shall now satisfy your curiosity on this point, and with it conclude my letter.

On the eighteenth of April, one thousand seven hundred and forty seven, his majesty raised the two regiments of Falster and Moene infantry. The twenty seventh of the following month was added to the national militia a body of fusiliers, called skielöbere, of six companies of an hundred men, and two companies of landwærn of an hundred and fifty. And each regiment of the dragoons of Norway was augmented by

by two hundred and forty men, divided into two companies.

The thirteen regiments of infantry of Norway were increased at the same time by an additional battalion to each, consisting in four companies of one hundred and fifty men, besides commissioned and non-commissioned officers.

In the year one thousand seven hundred and forty nine, two new regiments of dragoons were raised in Norway.

By an ordinance of the twenty-ninth of January one thousand seven hundred and fifty seven, every company in the cavalry except the life-guards, was allowed an additional supply of fifteen horses, with the view of rendering the squadrons stronger. Each company of dra-

goons received at the same time,
 five and thirty horses

The king, persuaded that a great number of troops is of much less importance than a well-directed discipline, published, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty three, a supplement to the regulations concerning the service of the infantry. This supplement contains several changes and additions to the former rules on the government and discipline of the troops, as well in garrison as in the field. The cavalry also are soon to receive additional instructions to their former regulations; the king having appointed commissioners for that purpose, who have sat upon this business already above a year.

It is needless to enter into any detail with regard to the many precautions

cautions his majesty has taken to keep his magazines constantly well provided ; to maintain in a proper state the royal arsenals of Copenhagen, Rendsbourg, and Aggerhuus ; as also to support and encourage by his protection and beneficence the iron and brass cannon founderies established at Moss in Norway, and now lately at Frederickswerk in Seeland ; as well as the powder-mills which have been increased in this reign. It is sufficient, merely to mention these several objects, in order to shew how far the king is distant from neglecting even in the midst of peace, any thing that concerns the security or defence of his dominions.

The
 detail with regard to the many pre-
 cautions

The following is the exact state of his majesty's land-forces, which I have this moment received:

Cavalry	-	-	-	5547
Dragoons, exclusive of the re-				
serve, which is nineteen men				
to a company	-	-	-	5357
				10904
Infantry	-	-	-	58379
Artillery	-	-	-	1368
				59747
Total	-	-	-	70651

In this list the irregular militia of Bornholm is not included.

I have the honor to be,

S I R, &c.

L E T.

The following is the exact state of
his Majesty's hands to the following
LETTER the Sixteenth.

To M. — M. — esquire.

SIR,

A State is capable of being improved, either by granting encouragement where the efforts of individuals are found too weak; or by removing vulgar prepossessions, when found destructive of the general good.

Both these methods have been employed in the danish state. Many even have been attended with success since the preceding letters were first written. To comply with your desire of knowing how these improvements have been brought about, and in what they consist, is at present my design.

Some

Some prejudices reason alone is sufficient to surmount; but there are others against which no probabilities will be able to prevail, over which no argument but an argument drawn from fact will be found to have any power; and those things are declared impossible, which happen not to have been actually put in execution.

Such has sometimes been the case in Denmark. The antient inhabitants of that kingdom and of Norway having encreased, we are told, to a considerable degree, supposed it not possible to subsist together any longer on their native soil; and many among them, disposed as they were to warlike expeditions, chose rather to seek, with less labor, tho with greater danger, for that livelihood abroad, which perseverance and industry would have procured them at home.

Nations

Nations thus drained were little likely to be excited by necessity to try experiments, or bestow any pains on barren vallies or dreary mountains. The most fertile fields alone were cultivated, as they produced nourishment sufficient for the people that remained.

It is generally allowed, however, that as the force and riches of a state consist in the number of its people, so its populousness is in proportion to the means of subsistence, which it should be the care of government to facilitate and enlarge.

These are maxims which, it has been the happiness of Denmark, that several of its late kings have had present to their minds, and have endeavored to put in practise in many instances.

Tho

Tho Denmark in its whole extent is naturally one of the most fertile countries of Europe, its sovereigns saw with regret that many parts of it lay desert and uncultivated, since the devastation occasioned by the black plague, in the fourteenth century.

They remarked, that, among others, two large districts belonging to the dioceses of Wiborg and Ribe in North Jutland were destitute of inhabitants, partly on account of the supposed want of springs or rivers throughout either.

To convert so considerable an extent of ground to useful purposes, to remove the obstacles which rendered it unfit for producing the necessaries of life, was in fact encouraging population; and some trials were made by former princes to attain that end.

Eafy

Easy as this project may have appeared in speculation, it was found not a little difficult to put in execution. And these districts were still abandoned, when his present majesty mounted the throne of Denmark, in the year one thousand seven hundred and forty-six.

The greatest care of Frederic the fifth, next to rendering his administration happy to the inhabitants of his dominions, has been to encrease their number.

To procure therefore the population of these two districts, came in its turn to be the object of his consideration.

It was found that these heaths, which were known under the name of *Al-beede*, *Randbölle-beede*, *Knud-strup-*

Arup-beede, occupying the center of the peninsula of jutland, were about fifty english miles in length, partly covered with shrubs and sands, partly full of marshes and of bogs, almost utterly uninhabited.

The want of rivers or apparent springs would alone have been a sufficient prejudice in the minds of those who lived any where near it, against endeavouring to settle in it. But many other causes concurred also to hinder them from making any such attempt: the rich who lay out money on land, are desirous to reap the advantages of it the same year, nor are they willing to expose themselves to the hardships of a new plantation, or to be deprived of those conveniences which the distance from a neighbourhood would render impossible to be procured. The poor, on the other hand, are incapacitated from put-

putting projects into execution which are so expensive in the undertaking, and so late in the returns. The inhabitants of this country of every degree, have already, beside, more land conveniently situated with regard to their own settlements, than they can find means to cultivate.

It appeared therefore to his majesty, that the most advantageous method of peopling this great desert, without prejudicing any other part of his dominions, was to invite foreigners to settle in it. And first, in order to destroy the opinion which had extended very far of these heaths being utterly uninhabitable, an enterprising husbandman was prevailed upon to reside there. A house and other conveniencies were provided for him at the king's expence. Several wells were dug, and excellent water, the want of which had been confide-

red hitherto as an unformountable obstacle, was found with ease. A considerable portion of land was allotted to him, according as he found means to turn it to advantage. What he has cultivated now, becomes the property of his posterity. Conditions so favorable increased the ardor with which his own active spirit prompted him to second the endeavors of the government. He has throve extremely well.

An experiment attended with such success, refuted better than any reasoning the prejudice that had been universally entertained against this country; what was thought impossible before, now was found to be a fact. It contributed also towards inducing his majesty to offer the same encouragement to others who should follow this husbandman's example. Invitations have been made, in consequence,

sequence, ever since the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty seven, to foreigners in several places, and particularly to germans; but precarious as was the subsistence of many of these in their own country, and miserable their prospect, surrounded by armies, and oppressed by tyrants, nothing but very advantageous proposals were likely to prevail upon them to abandon it in favor of another.

The king therefore ordered neater and more convenient houses than peasants are accustomed to enjoy to be built in proper places throughout this desert; instruments of husbandry and other necessary utensils to be purchased; and lands to be divided in shares in proportion to the number, and to the industry, of those who were intended to possess them.

Other privileges which vary according to the circumstances were also granted. Promises thus advantageous have prevailed already upon many to seek for that comfort and security in the heaths of Jutland, which was not to be found in their native soil. A great many hundred families, chiefly Palatines and Mecklenburgers, are actually now settled in the extent of the two districts of Wiborg and Ribe. Every expence which proved necessary towards conveying them from their former to their present habitations, has been paid by the royal treasury. Every obstacle that could obstruct their efforts in their new home has been removed, and every liberty allowed that they can either want or wish to forward their undertakings. Each person received a very sufficient stipend for his maintenance till settled,

a sti-

a stipend which was continued to them for a year afterwards. They now compose a very flourishing colony, which in all likelihood will grow every day more populous and more wealthy.

A gentleman of Copenhagen complimenting the king on his success in this particular among others, and considering it as a real acquisition to the crown, received this remarkable answer from his majesty: *Such indeed only are the conquests I think it is the duty of a good king to make.*

This is not the only instance in which the king has made very valuable additions to his dominions, without invading the right of any of his neighbours. Your curiosity is not particularly to know the character of the danish sovereign; and therefore what I have already said, or shall

hereafter mention, is less with any view to sound the praises of that prince, for which you are persuaded I can have no motive, *quorum causas procul habeo*, than to comply with your desire of learning the alterations that have lately happened in the state of Denmark.

Besides those considerable districts which I have told you had been hitherto abandoned on account of the barrenness of the soil, the remoteness of the situation, or the supposed want of some of the necessaries of life; several smaller but much more numerous portions of better land, however free from any of the foregoing inconveniencies, have also remained uncultivated; I mean the commons which form so great a proportion to the rest of the country in Denmark. The soil tho' often excellent in itself, produced but little advantage to any
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of those who had an equal right to it with others. No one person was willing to throw away pains on ground which all his neighbours might claim as well as he. The whole therefore lay neglected; often even considered as very poor land, for this good reason, that it was never cultivated or improved.

So great an obstacle to agriculture and population was not likely to remain very long without a remedy, in a state where the general prosperity is at present so zealously consulted. And in consequence of that rapidity with which the measures of the administration move in unlimited monarchies, a resolution was soon taken to divide all the commons in the kingdom. This edict would have soon been executed, had the government been willing to decide with less delicacy, or precaution on the pro-

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perties of individuals. As each of
 these commons consisted partly in
 pasture lands, partly in woods, and
 partly also in bogs, it was found not
 a little difficult to hit upon a method
 equally pleasing to every proprietor,
 of parcelling out lands which differed
 thus considerably in produce and in
 value; and of which every adjoining
 peasant availed himself not in pro-
 portion to his natural share, but as it
 happened occasionally to suit his par-
 ticular wants and opportunities. Se-
 veral villages had sometimes an equal
 right to the same common, and
 sometimes also individuals who lived
 at a distance were yet entitled to a
 share: as if it had been originally in-
 tended to render a division of them as
 perplexing and as difficult as it could
 be made by a multiplicity of proprie-
 tors, or a complication of titles. These
 are obstructions which could not be
 surmounted on a sudden, without com-

to committing some violence, and giving occasion to some murmur. Considerable time was therefore spent, and many efforts made, before any regulation concerning it was published. No edict however was enforced. The subjects only were invited to divide and enclose their commons by the sovereign, who had already given the example in his own domains. Every man's pretensions were considered with great tenderness and mature deliberation; nor was property, which the danish laws hold sacred, wrested from any in this case, tho it were even to promote the general good.

The happy consequences of this act are already evident to every eye. A great proportion of the whole country lies no longer waste. As the particular property of every peasant, so is his encouragement to tillage and industry, encreased. He who has children

children is the more ready now to see them married, as nothing but their own labor can be wanting to provide a comfortable subsistence for them. Thus populousness augments by accelerated degrees. New villages are erected on many of the commons. And what gives the country a very different appearance from that which it bore before, is that besides the cultivation of bleak and deserted lands, the houses of the peasants in many places are no longer built of mud: a kind of habitation, which beside the necessity of repairing once a year, were pernicious, no doubt, to health, and appeared the receptacles of abjectness and misery. A comfortable dwelling excites the desire of procuring conveniencies of other kinds, and encreases the industry of the possessor. It were to be wished, and there is even some reason to expect, that in a few years not a cabin built

built with mud shall be found in Denmark. The happiness, indeed, of peasants, who form so precious and so numerous a portion of the community, is greatly studied by the danish sovereign. A particular magistrate in every district is appointed to see justice done them on all occasions. Every method is pursued to redress the grievances of which they complain, and to take away the hardships which they are found to undergo.

I must not forget to mention to you, Sir, in a letter which relates so much as this does to the means that have been practised of peopling the territories of Denmark, that foreigners of all trades are very much encouraged in them. And indeed in many branches the natives form by much the smallest number. This circumstance, beside the evident and
imme-

immediate advantage it procures by the encrease of subjects, is attended also with other beneficial consequences. Not only in this manner improvements made abroad in all branches of trade are very soon conveyed to Denmark, but also several manufactories which had been hitherto confined to other countries, are thus daily introduced. No later than in the summer of the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty, a porcelain manufactory was established in the island of Amagh, which, there is great reason to expect, will soon equal those established in other parts. The favor thus shewn to foreign artificers must considerably contribute towards encreasing the quantity of exports, as well as diminish the necessity of importing manufactured goods of the same kind.

But to preserve the balance of trade equal

equal at least between other nations and the Danes, and to gain it even in favor of these last, nothing can be of such consequence as the multiplication of those sources, from whence are derived the commodities of the most quick consumption, and which are become the necessaries of life.

An article of this kind of very great expence is sugar. The island of Saint Thomas in the West Indies was the only place formerly from whence they could import immediately this valuable commodity, no more than cotton or coffee which are also the produce of the same climate. This little island, cultivated especially as it then was, supplied but a small part of their demands. The rest they were obliged to purchase from other nations, and particularly from the Dutch. The opportunity therefore was soon seized by Denmark to
add

add to its dominions the adjoining isle of Santa Cruz, which after having been successively possessed by the English, the Dutch, and the French, was abandoned by these last as unwholesome and ill watered. These apparent and temporary disadvantages did not deter the Danes from sending a colony to it. And in order to establish an extensive trade to the West Indies, which required considerable advances to be made, and was subject to more risks than individuals would perhaps have been willing to run the hazard of, a company was erected for the exclusive commerce of these islands. Notwithstanding this addition of Santa Cruz, and that also of Saint John, the quantity of danish sugars was by no means equal to the consumption of that commodity in the danish dominions, so late as in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty six.

There

There were at that time but two sugar-bakers in all the territories of Denmark. One was employed entirely by the company. The other was in fact just as much dependent upon them, they only being possessed of the sugars on which consequently they had an opportunity of setting a very high price. This scarcity was owing to a want of larger plantations, and more inhabitants in the danish islands. It appeared that useful as exclusive privileges certainly are, in the establishment of any new branch of commerce, so surely are they pernicious in its progress. The king was informed how necessary it was to allow a free trade. He purchased accordingly from the proprietors at the expence of about four hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling, the grant which his predecessors had made to them. Encouragement was given

ven to foreigners to settle and raise plantations, particularly in Santa Cruz, which has had great effects. The number of english, irish, french and dutch planters is very considerable there now. All religions are tolerated here as in the rest of the danish dominions. The small quantity of wood now upon the island, the augmentation of inhabitants, the plenty of good provisions, and other conveniencies of life, render this place much less unwholsome than it was formerly esteemed. The capital called Christianstadt, which in the year one thousand seven hundred and thirty nine, contained but four tolerable houses, is now a handsome, regular built town, and enjoys a very considerable trade. The islands of Saint Thomas and St. John are improved in the same proportion. Sugars are now sent from Denmark to Germany and Holland. I need not

not mention the great consequences this alteration must cause in favor of the danish trade and shipping. Not only the commerce of the West Indies, in its present state of freedom, is extremely advantageous to the Danes; but even the East India trade, confined as it yet is in the hands of a company, upon the strictest calculation of the goods imported from that part of the world, which are consumed in the dominions of Denmark, with the profits arising from those which are re-exported to other countries, it appears that, instead of being considerable losers by this branch of commerce, as is the case of most other nations, the balance is at least equal, and perhaps even inclines somewhat in its favor.

But tho Denmark, from the happiness of its situation, its division in-

to islands, its being the residence of the monarch, and the seat of government, partakes more immediately and to a greater degree of the advantages that accrue in general to the state; yet its sister kingdom Norway is far from remaining wholly unbenefited by them: nor is its particular improvement any way neglected by his majesty. Several new colonies have been sent into that country; considerable tracts of land, particularly in the district of Lier, which had hitherto lain waste, have been lately cultivated; and proposals are now under royal consideration for the cultivation of many more. The three great sources of the riches of Norway, its fisheries, its woods, and its mines, are in a very flourishing condition. One great and happy cause which preserves the industry and prosperity of the Norwegians, is the mildness with which they

they are governed, and the great liberties they enjoy. In the division of fortunes in numerous families, the equality which is observed is also of importance. No one child is so rich as to neglect the profession of his ancestors, nor are the rest so poor as to be unable to maintain a family of their own. Pride is avoided on the one side, and abjectness on the other. As there is no room for contempt from the elder, or for envy in the younger, so there is little likelihood of any disunion to subsist between them. They are all entitled to labor for themselves, but none are intitled to be idle.

The fish, the woods, and the mines of Norway are in appearance all equally inexhaustible, except indeed the oak and fir which grow scarce. The quantity of fish consumed, the quantity of wood cut

down, the quantity of ground tilled, have all a reciprocal effect upon each other. It is computed that double as much land is cultivated now in this country, as was in the former century. From hence some judgment may be formed likewise of the augmentation of the two first articles, as well as the encrease of people within the same period. Manufactories for all kinds of the different glass have been very recently established in Norway, and succeed already to so considerable a degree, that the king has been enabled to prohibit the introduction of these valuable commodities into either of his kingdoms.

The mines of Norway are extremely valuable, and become more so daily. Besides many very good ones of iron, and copper, there are excellent silver mines in two different parts

parts of the country. Those at Kongberg, fifty-two in number, were first worked in the year one thousand six hundred and twenty-three. There are about six thousand persons at present employed every way about these mines. A considerable town has been built adjoining to them. The metal is found pure and in blocks, and were there not prodigious intervals of rocks between the lumps of silver, these mines instead only of being the richest in Europe, as they now are, would become the most valuable in the world. Other mines have been discovered so late as in the year one thousand seven hundred and twenty six. But the particular operations this ore requires are extremely difficult; it is likely, however, that the obstacles which are now the strongest will be in time surmounted; and that these mines, as they are really very rich, may be wrought to great advantage.

The mines of Kongiberg belong to the king, and contribute not a little towards supporting the expences of the crown, which notwithstanding its exemption from a war, are extremely considerable. Since a late augmentation his majesty maintains at present about seventy-seven thousand troops. Not only his fleets are upon a very respectable footing, but there are ships building constantly in the old docks at Copenhagen, and galleys in those which have been erected lately at Fridericks-vern in Norway. No army or navy can be quicker or better recruited than those of Denmark and Norway. The inhabitants of these countries are regularly bred to arms, and exercised at proper intervals. They have not yet lost that bold and enterprizing spirit which animated their ancestors to so remarkable a degree. Their
fisheries

fisheries and foreign traffic must always produce such an immense number of seamen, that the royal navy can never fail being manned to the utmost advantage. Twenty four thousand sailors are at present enrolled for the service of the crown; besides these, three thousand six hundred sailors are maintained in constant pay at Copenhagen and Fridericks-vern, independent of the great number of carpenters and other tradesmen employed in the building and repairing ships. The regulation of the danish navy is on so good a footing, that perhaps its conduct should be considered as a model proper to be followed in some degree by every other maritime power.

It is surprizing to conceive how much the trade of Denmark, even as factors, has augmented since the beginning of this war. I remember to have seen in the port of Cotte in the Medi-

terranean, in the year one thousand seven hundred and fifty eight, no less than twenty danish vessels freighted by merchants of other nations, and not above six ships belonging to any other single state.

But you have perceived already that the extraordinary expences of his danish majesty relate not to war alone. There is scarce an object of good policy or government which he does not embrace with readiness. You have heard many instances from others, and you have read of some even in this letter. Morals, religion, learning, happiness, he endeavours to promote. Missionaries are employed by his bounty in greenland and in lapland, as well as in the more distant settlements, to inculcate into those savage nations some principles of religion, morality and society. Virtue is encouraged in Denmark by his precept

by precept and his example. Learning has made great progress in Denmark since his accession to the throne. An academy of sciences is established at Copenhagen, as well as one of polite letters. Men of knowledge and abilities, whether born his own subjects, or invited by his fame and his beneficence, are noticed by him. Few good books in any branch of science or literature but are now translated into the danish language: a circumstance extremely different from what was the case not very many years ago. Several works approved in manuscript by the academy are printed at the king's expence, and the entire sum arising from the sale of the performance is generally given to the author. In the year one thousand seven hundred and sixty one he sent four learned men into Arabia, messieurs Von haven, Forkol, Niebur and Cramer, attended by two draughtsmen,

men, in order to make observations in astronomy, geography, natural history, and natural philosophy, in a country where few persons have travelled, and which fewer have described.

A botanist was sent by his majesty into Norway, where he was continually employed for five years. He is now going to publish a *Flora Danica*, a work of great utility as well as magnificence, to be printed and engraved at the king's expence. A new and extensive physic garden was a few years ago established in the capital of Denmark. Rewards are offered for the best poems in the danish language, and for the best dissertations on useful subjects. The university of Copenhagen is one of the most flourishing in Europe; and the academy of Soroe, chiefly for the nobility, is not inconsiderable. Many of the professors are authors of excellent

cellent performances. The king maintains also abroad many young gentlemen on their studies and their travels, whose industry and abilities recommended them to his notice. Every branch in the economy of government has been discussed with freedom as with judgment, in many books lately published in Denmark. No useful hint is thrown away, or wholesome advice neglected. The king has often followed plans proposed in public pamphlets. No man feels the restraint of power in these dominions, whose mind was capable of being satisfied in any other place. In the establishment, or in the repeal of laws, those persons are consulted who are most concerned, or are the best judges. The taxes that are levied on particular towns or communities, are mostly assessed by the deputies of the place, or by the chief magistrates. Such has been the mildness

ness with which the late and present kings of Denmark have reigned over all their subjects, that notwithstanding the formality of unlimited authority which the sovereigns of that nation possess, the Danes accustomed to a just and regular administration, enjoying freedom in fact, whatever they do in form, would not see with patience the royal prerogative strained too far, or the laws violated too openly. A great proof that they differ essentially from all arbitrary governments, is that they constantly assert in their discourses and their writings that they are free: a speech which would be fatal in many states, and dangerous in every monarchy except Sweden and Great-Britain. As these two last kingdoms have proved what had been often thought a paradox, that liberty can subsist with the form of a monarchy; so the Danes seem willing to be a proof that

that liberty can also be allied to a
 sovereign who has signed no con-
 tract.

I conclude, Sir,

With great attachment

and esteem,

Yours, &c.

S. I. N. I. S.

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